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ANALYSIS

Peace deal could see Afghans trade freedoms for safety

By J.P. LAWRENCE
AND PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — If peace talks between the United States and the Taliban continue to progress, Afghans and Westerners alike will have to come to terms with a group whose societal views and bloody tactics have clashed diametrically with their own for decades.

While top U.S. negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad has publicly announced “significant progress on vital issues” and the Taliban

also spoke of making headway at the end of six days of talks on Saturday, the details of troop exits, power-sharing and other points have both sides simultaneously expressing caution.

Power-sharing would require Afghans to make undetermined concessions to the Taliban, which had previously banned

music and dancing, as well as radio, television, movies, the internet and a host of other things under their interpretation of Islam.

Some in Kabul who have grown used to their freedoms say they are ready to compromise.

“People who have more cosmopolitan views realize that they have a choice between a bad and a worse situation,” said Intizar Khadim, an independent political analyst in Kabul. “They are very happy if there are no nightclubs in Kabul in exchange for it being safe.”

Intellectuals like Khadim, small business owners and women in urban areas have seen significant advances since the Taliban was overthrown in 2001, though in many rural areas little has changed.

However, Khadim and two others here who spoke with Stars and Stripes agreed that the Taliban in government didn’t worry them because they don’t believe it would lead to a loss of their fundamental rights.

It’s unknown whether the Taliban would renounce a power-sharing agreement and attempt a takeover if given the opportunity. Afghanistan’s record of maintaining peace following the end of civil and international wars is poor. Nearly every

SEE DEAL ON PAGE 5



Speaking openly

Afghan special operations pilot takes fight online

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — An Afghan special operations pilot is fighting the Taliban both in the air and online, inspired by the memory of an American comrade who died in a high-profile insider attack last year.

The Taliban have the upper hand in the information war, said Maj. Abdul Rahman Rahmani, a helicopter

SEE ONLINE ON PAGE 4

‘It’s a bit risky, but it’s good for the country.’

Maj. Abdul Rahman Rahmani

Afghan helicopter pilot, on his social media posts

Afghan pilot Maj. Abdul Rahman Rahmani inspects his Russian-made helicopter between missions on Dec. 12 in Kabul, Afghanistan.

J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

MILITARY

S. Korean president dismisses reports of cost-sharing price

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Despite shutdown’s end, tax refunds could be delayed

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Hathaway a different kind of femme fatal in thriller ‘Serenity’

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Djokovic defeats Nadal in final » Australian Open, Page 31

MILITARY

South Korea denies Trump gave a cost-sharing price

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Friday dismissed reports that President Donald Trump named a specific price for maintaining U.S. troops on the divided peninsula.

Moon's comments came after the South Korean daily newspaper JoongAng Ilbo cited an unnamed source as saying Trump demanded \$1.2 billion during their summit on the sidelines of the G20 summit in November.

Moon said that Trump sometimes raises the bilateral free trade agreement and defense cost-sharing during their talks — but never specific conditions or amounts.

“Not just President Trump but no leader of any country in the world speaks in such a manner,” Moon said, according to a transcript from his office. “Such reports can be an insult to President Trump.”

Reports about the amount demanded by the United States have varied widely as senior diplomats from both sides held 10 rounds of talks last year, trying to narrow the gap.

But Trump, who is known for his unpredictable leadership style and seemingly off-the-cuff remarks and tweets, has made clear that he wants more.

The dispute threatens the foundation of the decades-old alliance between the two countries at a



Courtesy of the Blue House

South Korean President Moon Jae-in, shown in Seoul, South Korea, in January 2017, has denied reports that President Donald Trump demanded \$1.2 billion to maintain U.S. troops on the peninsula.

sensitive time since Washington needs Seoul's help in its efforts to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons.

Many experts believe the president may use the standoff as an excuse to put troop numbers on the table during his expected summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un next month.

Moon, who has played mediator in the parallel nuclear talks,

has dismissed that suggestion as well.

About 28,500 U.S. servicemembers are stationed in South Korea, which remains technically at war with the North after their 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

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1st Combat Aviation Brigade rotation to arrive in Europe

Stars and Stripes

WIESBADEN, Germany — The fourth U.S. Army rotational aviation brigade is scheduled to arrive in Belgium in late January, U.S. Army Europe and the 21st Theater Sustainment Command said in a statement Friday.

More than 1,900 troops and 80 aircraft from the 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, in Fort Riley, Kan., will replace the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, from Fort Carson, Colo. The Colorado unit has been in Europe for the past nine months.

The equipment, including Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters, is scheduled to arrive Tuesday in Zebruggen, Belgium, the statement said.

news@stripes.com



Row Lee/Courtesy of the U.S. Army National Guard

A U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopter assigned to 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colo., awaits its next mission. The 4th CAB is being replaced in Germany by the 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

US, Canadian fighter planes scramble to escort Russian jets

Associated Press

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Military authorities say U.S. Air Force and Canadian fighter jets were scrambled to escort two Russian bombers that were traveling in the Arctic region near the North American coastline.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command said two F-22 and two CF-18 fighter jets identified two Russian Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bombers that were entering an area patrolled by the Royal Canadian Air Force on Saturday morning.

There were no reports of conflict between the Russian and the U.S. and Canadian jets.

NORAD says it uses radar, satellites and fighter aircraft to patrol the skies and monitor aircraft entering U.S. or Canadian airspace.

“NORAD's top priority is defending Canada and the United States. Our ability to protect our nations starts with successfully detecting, tracking, and positively identifying aircraft of interest approaching U.S. and Canadian airspace,” General Terrence J. O’Shaughnessy, the NORAD commander, said in a statement.

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MILITARY



JEREMY GRAHAM/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS McCampbell, shown departing Sydney, Australia, in 2017, is one of two U.S. Navy ships that sailed through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday.

Navy destroyer, refueler sail through Taiwan Strait amid China tensions

By CATLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

A pair of Navy ships sailed through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday, about a week after a top Chinese military leader warned the United States against meddling in its relations with Taiwan.

The destroyer USS McCampbell and fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl sailed through the strait "in accordance with international law," Pacific Fleet spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Tim Gorman said Friday.

"The ships' transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," he added. "The U.S. Navy will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows."

The action came a week after Gen. Li Zuoqiang, chief of the Chinese military's Joint Staff Department, warned the U.S. during a meeting with the U.S. Navy's top officer not to support an independent Taiwan, according to the South China Morning Post.

"If anyone wants to separate Taiwan from China, the Chinese military will safeguard the national unity at all costs so as to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity," Li said in a Jan. 15 meeting with Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson in Beijing, according to the newspaper.

Three days later, Richardson told reporters in Tokyo that he "reiterated very clearly (to Li)

that the United States is committed to the One China policy" that acknowledges Taiwan as part of China.

"We remain opposed to any sort of unilateral action on either side of the strait to change that status quo," he said.

Both China and Taiwan have made military gestures in the past two weeks. Tuesday, the Chinese People's Liberation Army flew military aircraft close to the island itself and through the channel separating the Philippines and Taiwan's Orchid Island, according to a report Thursday on The Diplomat website.

A Chinese jet fighter and reconnaissance plane, along with other unspecified aircraft, flew through the channel, according to the report.

That demonstration by the Chinese came a week after the Taiwanese military held a large-scale, live-fire drill, exercising its ability to deter a potential Chinese invasion, the news site reported.

Such exercises and Chinese patrol flights are regular occurrences, The Diplomat reported.

The Navy's mission Thursday was the first time its vessels have transited the Taiwan Strait this year. In 2018, the U.S. sent warships through the strait in July, November and December.

Before July 2018, a year had passed since a U.S. warship was sent through the strait.

After the Navy's November passage through the strait, China "expressed concern" to the U.S.,

according to a translated transcript of a press conference with Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang.

At that press conference, Geng called the Taiwan issue "the most important and sensitive issue in the China-US relations," according to the transcript.

Speaking with reporters in Tokyo last week, Richardson said operations through the Taiwan Strait should not be interpreted as a provocation toward China or Taiwan.

"We see the Taiwan Strait as another international water, that's why we do transits through the straits," he said. "We're just exercising the rights to pass through those waters in accordance with international law."

"China Military Power" — a Defense Intelligence Agency report released Jan. 15 — said Beijing's desire to reunify with Taiwan "has served as the primary driver for China's military modernization."

While Thursday's transit was the fourth since July, more than 10 years have passed since the Navy sent an aircraft carrier through the Taiwan Strait. Richardson said sending a carrier in the future is not out of the question.

"I don't see any kind of limitation on whatever type of ship that could pass through those waters," he said. "I wouldn't say there's any prohibition to that."

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Base projects to boost NATO's Albania presence

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

NATO is set to boost its presence in the western Balkans — where the West and Russia have been locked in a struggle for influence — as Albania prepares to host the alliance's first military base in the region in coming years.

U.S. and Albanian military officials on Thursday marked the first phase of the \$58 million project to modernize Kucova Air Base in central Albania and bring its facilities in line with NATO-approved standards, alliance officials said.

Serving in his role as NATO's allied air commander, Gen. Tod Wolters, who also leads U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa, attended the groundbreaking ceremony in Tirana at the Albanian Defense Ministry, where he spoke alongside Olta Xhaka, the country's defense minister.

"What we anticipate over the course of the next months and years is the continuing improvement of the infrastructure and what will ultimately happen is there will be a aircraft haven at Kucova," Wolters said in an Allied Air Command statement. "We are extremely, extremely excited about advancing that cause."

Planned improvements to the base — built with Soviet assistance in the early 1950s — include runway restoration, control tower upgrades, construction of a fighter ramp, fuel and ammunition storage facilities, and a new crash and fire station, the statement said.

The work will support NATO air transport, logistics, air policing and training, Albanian officials have said.

The Albanian air force no longer operates fixed-wing aircraft. Since 2009, when the former communist country joined the alliance, NATO neighbors Italy and Greece have been providing air policing over Albania.

NATO's investment in Albania comes on the heels of Xhaka's

trip last spring to Washington. While meeting with then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, she said Albania wanted to host a U.S. or NATO presence to counter Russian efforts to expand its influence, as well as to balance growing interest in the region from countries such as China and Iran.

"I believe that a very strong message needs to be sent, that the Western Balkans is a Western-oriented region," she said, according to the Pentagon's transcript of her remarks.

The region has been the scene of a battle for influence between the West and Russia, which has criticized moves to expand NATO membership in the area, claiming it threatens regional security.

Some Western officials have stated that bringing all the nations of the Western Balkans into NATO and the European Union will foster stability in a region that was convulsed by a series of wars in the 1990s.

Moscow has been accused of fomenting an unsuccessful coup attempt in neighboring Montenegro to prevent its accession to the military alliance in 2017, and of trying to prevent Macedonia, another neighbor of Albania, from seeking NATO membership. During his visit to Serbia earlier this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the United States and NATO of destabilizing the region.

The establishment of Kucova as the first NATO air base in the western Balkans gives the alliance an important strategic site about an hour's flight from Syria, Blerim Rika, a professor at South East European University in Macedonia, wrote earlier this month in a piece for the think tank Emerging Europe.

The military buildup in the region, Rika wrote, "is part of a broader tug-of-war for strategic advantage around the Mediterranean Sea" between the U.S. and Russia.

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Pair of Guam airmen face trial on sex offenses in unrelated cases

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A pair of airmen assigned to Andersen Air Force Base on Guam face separate courts-martial there in the coming weeks for sexual and related offenses.

A trial is expected to start Feb. 11 for Tech. Sgt. Donald Frierson Jr. for the alleged 2017 sexual as-

sault of a child in Germany, according to the Air Force court docket and a copy of his charge sheet.

In an unrelated case, Tech. Sgt. Jacory Royster is due in court Monday to start trial on charges of aggravated sexual assault, indecent language and solicitation, according to the docket and his charge sheet.

Both airmen are charged under

the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Trial for each man could last a week.

In Frierson's case, prosecutors allege he touched the buttocks of a 12-year-old girl through her clothing, kissed her back and touched her upper thighs.

The incidents allegedly took place between June and September 2017 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Frierson is attached to the 36th Communications Squadron.

In Royster's case, prosecutors allege he touched a woman's back and buttocks with his hand, through her clothes and without her consent. He also allegedly touched the woman's leg with his leg, also without her consent.

According to the charge sheet, Royster did so with "intent to gratify his sexual desire, by caus-

ing bodily harm to her."

Royster also allegedly made sexually graphic remarks about the woman.

That incident allegedly occurred July 14 in Dededo, Guam.

Air Force officials said they would not be able to respond to requests seeking further information last week.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Online: Death of US soldier, friend motivates Afghan pilot to keep fighting

FROM FRONT PAGE

pilot with the elite Special Mission Wing.

The 34-year-old, who posts frequently on social media, believes the Afghan people deserve to know what their armed forces are doing to combat the insurgent group.

"It is a bit risky to speak in open media and social media. It's a bit risky, but it's good for the country," he said. "The Taliban are telling their own story. We do not, and I think the Afghan government can help their security forces to speak up and tell their own story."

His online voice was amplified in November when he posted a letter he'd written to the widow of his close friend — Utah National Guard Maj. Brent Taylor, who was killed in an attack Nov. 3. The post was shared and liked by thousands, drawing the attention of the international media and eventually reaching Taylor's family.

"I wanted to convey a message to his family that the one who killed him does not represent Afghanistan," Rahmani, who calls himself a member of a new generation hoping for change, said during an interview with Stars and Stripes at an Afghan air base in the capital.

For Rahmani, Taylor was yet another friend lost to the fighting in his country, which has reached a bloody stalemate since the U.S. and coalition forces pulled out most of their combat troops in 2014 and transitioned to an advisory mission the following year.

In the past four years, Taliban insurgents have gained ground and are believed to hold or contest more territory now than since the 2001 invasion. More than 45,000 police and soldiers have died since the Afghan security forces took over the main job of fighting the militants, President Ashraf Ghani said Friday.

Rahmani's online dispatches praise government reforms, tout successful commando missions, highlight video footage of deadly strikes on enemy compounds and denounce insurgent violence.

He has also found a voice through traditional media, including a recent column on India's efforts in Afghanistan in *Hindustan Times*, and another on a U.S. defense website decrying the influence of Iranian propaganda. Prior to that, he published a book of stories about life in the beleaguered "heart of Asia."

The decades of conflict here have left only him to carry on the family name, he said. His father and three uncles all died fighting Soviet troops in the 1980s.

"That's why I have to have a big family," the father of five said.

From refugee to student

Like many in Afghanistan, he grew up across the border in a refugee camp in Pakistan, displaced by the violence at home. He recalled waiting in line up to six hours for a water ration. As a child, he walked along streets selling plastic bags to make a bit of money, he said.

After the Soviet retreat, his



PHOTOS BY J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

Afghan pilot Maj. Abdul Rahman Rahmani sits in his Russian-made helicopter between missions on Dec. 12 in Kabul, Afghanistan.

family returned to Kabul, but civil war broke out as the guerrillas, or mujahedeen, who'd fought the communists with backing from the U.S. and Pakistan turned on one another in a battle for control of the country in the early 1990s.

"You would not know who was friend and who was foe," Rahmani recalled.

Rocket attacks in the capital were so commonplace he and other children would hide under vans at the sound of incoming rockets, then resume playing after the boom as if it all were normal.

The rise of the Taliban ended the war but brought its own terrors. At one point, his cousin was kidnapped on the road to Zabul and "cut into pieces" by the extremists, he said.

A few years after the 2001 U.S. invasion toppled the regime, Rahmani joined the Afghan military, first as a special operations soldier until taking to the skies as a flight engineer in 2008 — one of his country's first to complete a two-year training program in the United Kingdom.

"I want to see Afghanistan (become) a peaceful place, at least for my children," Rahmani said. "I don't want my children to grow up like me."

A graduate of Kabul University with a bachelor's degree in sociology, he also underwent pilot training in 2012 at Fort Rucker, Ala., and more recently completed the Marine Corps' Expeditionary Warfare School in Quantico, Va.

Rahmani now flies the Mi-17 helicopters that haul commandos on clandestine counterinsurgency, counterterrorism and counter-narcotics missions, often at night

'I will continue to still fight this 'good fight' ... I am fighting for a great cause.'

Maj. Abdul Rahman Rahmani
Afghan pilot

on raids into enemy territory.

He pulled up his right pant leg and pointed to a series of divots — wounds from a firefight after an ambush. He's lost feeling in his leg unless it's cold when the pain sometimes returns.

A soldier's legacy

The Special Mission Wing and other commando units work closely with American troops, which is how Rahmani met Taylor, who was mayor of North Ogden, Utah, and had received orders to deploy to help train an Afghan commando battalion.

On missions, the two would chat about war and peace, and often about family. Both in their 30s and fathers to several children, the men had been shaped by their country's wars.

Rahmani has been wounded twice during his 15 years of military service. Taylor, 39, had deployed twice to Iraq and was on his second Afghanistan deployment when he died. He'd previously been wounded in battle, too, and had earned a Purple Heart.

Like Rahmani, Taylor had used social media to tell his story while on deployment, posting screen-



Rahmani's message to the widow of his close friend, Utah National Guard Maj. Brent Taylor, and his hopes for Afghanistan's future can be found in a video message at [stripes.com/go/pilot](https://www.stripes.com/go/pilot).

shots of video calls to his seven children back home or sharing news about the U.S. mission with his constituents.

Shortly before he was killed, he posted about recent parliamentary elections here, calling it a success for the country and "for the cause of human freedom" after many people braved threats and attacks to vote.

Rahmani sees his own children for only a few hours each week when he's not on high-risk missions.

He angled his arm in front of him. When people ask how big his youngest son is now, he points to his forearm and says, "this long" — not "this tall," because he only ever sees him asleep in his crib, not standing up.

One of the enduring lessons

Rahmani learned from his wife with Taylor was to see his family differently now, a revelation he shared in the letter to the slain soldier's wife in his November tweet.

"Your husband taught me to love my wife Hamida as an equal and treat my children as treasured gifts," he wrote. "To be a better father, to be a better husband (sic), and to be a better man."

In Taylor's honor, and on behalf of his fellow Special Mission Wing troops, he pledged to fight for peace in his homeland.

"I will continue to still fight this 'good fight' in the words of your respectful husband," he wrote. "I am fighting for a great cause."

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Once-vast ISIS caliphate now just a pair of Syrian villages

By Liz Sly

The Washington Post

BEIRUT — A pair of dusty villages in the Syrian desert are all that remain of the vast expanse of territory Islamic State once called its caliphate, and the complete territorial defeat of the militant group appears to be imminent, according to U.S. and Kurdish officials.

A few hundred of some of the most die-hard ISIS fighters are making their last stand in the villages of Marashida and Baghuz Fawqani on the banks of the Euphrates River, a few miles from the Iraqi border in southeastern Syria. With the Syrian army on the other side of the river, a group that once controlled an area the size of Britain is pinned down by the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in a dot of land measuring 6 square miles.

It is now only a matter of weeks or even days before the villages are overrun and ISIS' vaunted state-building enterprise in Syria and Iraq is brought to an end, military officials say.

The conclusion of the 4½-year war will add urgency to the question of when and how the United States will pull its forces out of Syria, as ordered by President Donald Trump last month.

He later said they would remain to finish the fight against

ISIS, and no date has been set for their withdrawal.

Col. Sean Ryan, the U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, cautioned that the end of the war on the ground will not halt the threat posed by ISIS, which is trying to regroup as an insurgent force in many of the areas where it has lost control.

Although the military has withdrawn some equipment, no troops have left and no deadline for a pullout has been issued, he said. In the meantime, U.S. troops will be focusing on training their local partners and stabilizing the area to deter a return of the militants.

"The end is near territorially-wise, but they will continue to regroup and, like we've seen over the past two weeks, will try to create spectacular events," Ryan said, referring to the suicide bombing at a restaurant in the town of Manbij last week which killed four Americans. It came more than three years after ISIS had been driven out of that area.

The holdouts in the two desert villages include some of the most committed extremists, who have remained on the battlefield despite multiple opportunities to escape or surrender and can be expected to fight until the end.

But if the campaign by U.S.-backed forces proceeds as well as it has in recent days, it could be over within as little as two weeks, Ryan said.

Mazlum Kobani, the top commander of the SDF, told *Agence France-Presse* on Friday that it would take no more than a month.

"I believe that during the next month, we will officially announce the end of the military presence on the ground of the so-called caliphate," Kobani said.

The remaining militants include some of ISIS' most senior leaders and "famous terrorists," according to Zana Amedi, a spokesman for the Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, which is the biggest component of the SDF.

U.S. and Kurdish officials do not believe, however, that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the ISIS leader, is among them. "He would have to be stupid to stay in the last pocket until the end," said Amedi. "He would have escaped a long time ago, before the situation deteriorated for them so much. He's not dead, and he's not in these villages, either."

A big percentage of those who remain are foreigners who flocked to Syria to join ISIS when it was at the peak of its power. Because of their appearance, they would stand out among the locals if they tried to blend in with the civilians fleeing the battlefield, as some local fighters have done.

"They have no choice but to fight to the death or surrender," Amedi said.

Dozens of foreigners are among scores of fighters who have sur-

The last pocket of Islamic State control in Syria



SOURCES: IHS Jane's Conflict Monitor, imagery via Sinergise and ESA

THE WASHINGTON POST

rendered or have been caught trying to escape over the past week, Amedi said. A majority of the foreigners are Iraqis, but there are also Europeans, Americans and Asians among them.

Thousands of civilians have also been streaming out of the area and handing themselves over at SDF checkpoints, where they are screened for ISIS fighters trying to hide among them, he said.

Civilians have been dying too — in the crossfire, at the hands of ISIS snipers who seek to prevent them from escaping and in the U.S.-led airstrikes providing the muscle behind the offensive.

The U.S. military said Friday it has launched an investigation into what appears to have been one of the worst incidents: As many as 39 civilians were killed in the town

of Baghuz last Tuesday when vehicles in which they were trying to flee were struck.

The eventual fate of the entire swath of eastern Syria now under U.S. military control as a result of the ISIS war has yet to be decided. Trump's sudden announcement that the troops would be withdrawn set off an international scramble to figure out what to do with the territory, amounting to almost a third of Syria.

Any vacuum of authority in the area would offer an opportunity for ISIS to re-establish itself among the local populace, whose loyalties are deeply divided among the multiple powers competing for control, said Nicholas Heras, of the Center for a New American Security.

Deal: Taliban offer to renounce al-Qaida ties spurs optimism

FROM FRONT PAGE

government leader in the 20th century was either killed or exiled, the last of which fled from the Taliban following their takeover in 1996.

But at least one female Afghan lawmaker said the Taliban would not have enough public support.

The group's overall appeal remains relatively weak, said Shenka Zahen Karokhill, a member of Afghanistan's parliament and former ambassador to Canada. Their presence in Kabul would likely have no major impact on the lifestyles to which many Afghans have grown accustomed, she said.

However, she emphasized that any peace deal allowing their return would have to be approved by the Afghan government and not the U.S. alone.

"We all support peace, but Afghans should take part in every part of the peacemaking effort. Otherwise, it is a concern," Karokhill said.

The U.S. has repeatedly voiced similar sentiments, which highlights another sticking point of the preliminary negotiations: getting the insurgents to hold direct discussions with the government in Kabul — which they have long refused.

Among the remaining issues



J.P. Lawrence/Stars and Stripes

A crowd flies both Taliban and Afghan flags aboard military vehicles for impromptu parades last June in Logar province during a truce between the Taliban and the government.

likely to require Kabul's involvement are discussions about the release of prisoners, the removal of Taliban leaders from international blacklists and the creation of an interim government that could give the insurgent group a legitimate political role. Peace talks can take years, if not decades, some experts cautioned.

While the Taliban adhered to a brief cease-fire last summer, it's unclear whether they would hold to a longer-term truce, said Michael Kugelman, deputy director

of the Asia program at the Wilson Center in Washington.

"Who's to say the Taliban won't go back on their commitment?" Kugelman said.

However, Kugelman said there is reason for optimism following reports that the Taliban has offered to renounce ties with al-Qaida and agree to keep extremist groups from using the country to launch attacks on America.

"That's been one of the big asks of the U.S. and the Afghan government for some time, and for

the Taliban to agree so quickly is somewhat surprising," Kugelman said.

Though it's unclear how the U.S. would enforce the Taliban pledge to keep their country from being used as a platform for launching attacks on the West, in principle it achieves a key aim of the war.

That's significant for Christopher D. Kolenda, a retired Army colonel who led four combat tours in the country and served as a Pentagon adviser.

"I've lost soldiers fighting the Taliban. I'm responsible for killing a lot of Taliban," Kolenda said. "At the end of the day, you can't afford to lose sight of why you've gone to war. It's not just to perpetuate a cycle of violence. It's to accomplish legitimate national aims."

Last year, Kolenda's discussions with Taliban officials in Qatar helped kick off the latest round of peace negotiations, the first serious discussions since an earlier effort fell apart in 2015.

"At some point, all wars have to end," he said. "There is no perfect justice and retribution. If all you want is absolute justice and retribution, you'll never get an end to war, and if all you want is an end to war, you'll never get any justice."

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NATION

Shutdown shows dependence on government

By DAMIAN PALETTA

The Washington Post

President Donald Trump has repeatedly proposed gutting the federal bureaucracy, privatizing the air traffic control system and shrinking the federal workforce.

But by leading the country through the longest government shutdown in American history, he inadvertently revealed how intertwined the government is with millions of households, businesses and the entire U.S. economy.

The sharp rebuke he received from the public — and his decision Friday to reopen the government without winning concessions — could refresh a debate about the size and scale of government that has begun to frame the 2020 election.

The severe economic strain caused by the five-week shutdown forced small-government conservatives to break from Trump in a way they hadn't before. They were overwhelmed with pleas from businesses and families caught in the middle of the shutdown, far beyond just the 800,000 federal employees who hadn't been paid in a month.

The air travel system bogged down. Tax refunds appeared in jeopardy. Parts of the federal court system were preparing to close. Food stamp benefits neared expiration, and the government was running out of money to pay rent for its own agencies, let alone low-income families who receive housing benefits.

Even though the shutdown

‘Government is the invisible infrastructure that makes our society and our economy function smoothly.’

Robert Reischauer

former director of the Congressional Budget Office

affected less than a quarter of the government's budget, White House officials said they believed it could have stalled the entire economy if it continued for much longer.

"The government touches so much of the economy that you don't even realize," said Melissa Kearney, an economics professor at the University of Maryland.

The U.S. government is projected to spend roughly \$4.5 trillion this year, a figure that represents 21 percent of the overall economy. The funding lapse affected just a small segment of that budget, and even though it broke the previous record for a funding lapse, it still lasted only 35 days.

While 800,000 federal employees weren't paid for the month, they represent a tiny fraction of the overall workforce. But their role in the government proved integral enough to cause panic among major U.S. businesses and industries, who pleaded with policymakers in recent days to back down.

"Even though it was one-half of 1 percent of the workforce that was furloughed, those jobs provide the context for the whole

economy," said Matthew Slaughter, who was a member of the White House Council of Economic Advisers during the George W. Bush administration and is now dean of the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College.

Slaughter likened it to referees being pulled off the field during a professional football game. The referees often go unnoticed, but they set the rules and boundaries for much of the game, and without them the system eventually becomes unmanageable.

Republicans, particularly when they are in power, have long struggled to agree on the role of government in America. Tax-cut crusader Grover Norquist once called for shrinking the federal government down to a size that would make it possible to drown it in a "bathtub."

In an interview Friday, however, Norquist said a government shutdown was never the way for conservatives to lead a serious debate about how much government is enough. He said a government shutdown doesn't even shut down the government; it just cuts paychecks and causes inconveniences that are eventually going

to be restored.

"You don't cut the federal budget," he said. "You reform the federal government to cost less."

Both political parties are in the midst of a fierce debate about the proper size and scale of government. Trump has proposed deep cuts to agency budgets, particularly at agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, but he has actually expanded the government's budget markedly in the past two years.

The budget deficit — the gap between spending and tax revenue — is projected to near \$1 trillion this year in part because the government keeps expanding and in part because Trump has enacted significant tax cuts.

Democrats, meanwhile, are wrestling with how much bigger they want the government to grow. Some have called for dramatically expanding access to federal health care, college assistance programs and other benefits in a way that expands government spending even more.

The debates in both parties had been mostly theoretical and were expected to intensify during political campaigns next year, but that could change if the public views the role of government different after the shutdown.

Many parts of the government have been assembled in such a piecemeal way that there are redundancies and inconsistencies that both parties have struggled and failed to address. That has led to complaints of rampant waste and fraud, and inspectors

general and other watchdogs routinely expose misappropriated spending.

But core parts of the government have become completely ingrained in the U.S. economy. The food stamp benefits that appeared set to expire in March reach close to 40 million Americans and represent a large share of the income in certain communities.

Similarly, the Department of Housing and Urban Development covers the rent for many buildings full of elderly Americans, another program that was threatened. Those programs frequently attract little public attention, in part because the prospect of the funds disappearing never seemed possible.

Trump signed into law a three-week spending bill and raised the prospect on Friday of another shutdown in mid-February, an idea that many Republican lawmakers deride.

That's in part because key parts of the government that hadn't elicited much thought until the shutdown were thrust into the spotlight in the past month. They could stay there for a while.

"Government is the invisible infrastructure that makes our society and our economy function smoothly," said Robert Reischauer, a former director of the Congressional Budget Office. "And then it becomes more apparent when people can't get their permit to fish in the waters off Alaska, or they can't get their building permits or Section 8 vouchers on which they depend."

Even with IRS staffers returning, tax refunds may be delayed

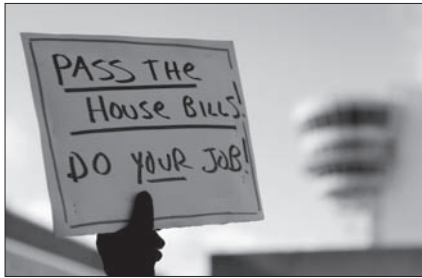
By MARCY GORDON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The IRS' workforce will return to full strength under the short-term deal to reopen the government struck Friday by President Donald Trump and congressional leaders. But the disruption from the partial shutdown and the recent absence of a large contingent of recalled IRS employees mean the possibility of delayed tax refunds.

The official start of the tax filing season is Monday, and the Trump administration has said taxpayers who are owed refunds would receive them on time despite the shutdown. The administration made money available to pay hundreds of billions in refunds and ordered nearly 60 percent of the Internal Revenue Service workforce back to work without pay.

But fewer than half of 26,000 furloughed IRS employees who were recalled to work during the shutdown to handle tax returns and taxpayers' questions had returned to their jobs as of Tuesday, according to congressional and government aides. Of the roughly 14,000 recalled employees who hadn't reported to work,



MATT SLOCUM/AP

A demonstrator holds a sign during a rally by federal workers at the Philadelphia International Airport before the government shutdown ended Friday. Disruptions at the IRS may delay tax refunds.

IRS officials told House staffers Thursday, around 5,900 sought permission under their union contract to be absent because of financial hardship. The remaining 9,000 couldn't be reached by IRS managers.

In addition to the 35-day shutdown, the complexities of a new tax law have burdened an IRS that has been starved for funding for years. Getting refunds out in

time could be a heavy lift.

"Just because you reopen the permission under their union Day 1 everything is normal," said Jorge Castro, a former counselor to the IRS commissioner and senior counsel to the Senate Commerce Committee who is now at the law firm Miller & Chevalier. "There's still a backlog. The IRS has not been at full capacity in its operations for over a month."

About three-quarters of U.S. taxpayers receive annual refunds. Lower-income households, in particular, depend on refunds as their biggest cash infusion of the year.

Beyond refunds, no audits of tax returns were being done during the shutdown because IRS auditors were furloughed. That's a double-edged problem: A lack of inspections could invite cheating and the money normally captured by audits isn't flowing to the national coffers.

"The decline in audits has been an ongoing problem at the IRS for many years," said Howard Gleckman, senior fellow at the Urban Institute. "Reducing them even further will only encourage more people to game the tax system."

And that's bad for all of us who do pay the taxes we owe."

The administration had planned to eventually send about 46,000 furloughed IRS employees back to work during the shutdown — nearly 60 percent of the IRS workforce.

The IRS employees' union contract allows them to be absent from work if they experience hardship during a shutdown, and they don't have to use sick days to do so. Managers must approve hardship exceptions, though.

Union officials say they don't support employees staying away "as a form of protest" but do support workers claiming the exception for true financial hardship.

If the shutdown weren't enough to contend with, taxpayers and the IRS have to grapple with the most sweeping overhaul of the U.S. tax code in three decades. Enacted by Republicans in December 2017, the changes provided for \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts. The package was signed into law by Trump as his signature legislative achievement. It took effect Jan. 1, 2018.

The difficulties for the IRS come as the agency is hobbled by what is widely viewed as a skimpy budget. Republicans controlling the congressional purse strings for years accused the IRS of having a liberal bias and of unfairly targeting conservative tax-exempt groups.

Last year, with the new tax law looming, Congress was more willing to open its wallet for the IRS and blunt the Trump administration's proposed cuts. But it ended up cutting in other areas. The result is that the agency's budget is about the same — \$11.4 billion — as in recent years.

NATION



ROBERT BERLIN, THE (MARTVILLE, TENN.) DAILY TIMES/AP

The Great Smoky Mountain National Park, shown here on Jan. 5, is among the parks the National Park Service reopened on Saturday after the partial government shutdown ended.

National parks start to reopen to visitors

BY AMY FORLITI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Park rangers were once again greeting visitors at some national parks across the United States and flight operations at major airports were returning to normal Saturday, one day after a partial government shutdown came to an end.

While there were signs that some government machinery was grinding back to life after a record 35 days without funding, many federal workers and their families approached the end of the shutdown cautiously, saying they were relieved they would receive paychecks again but would continue to restrict their spending amid fears that another shutdown could happen in weeks.

"You can only be so happy because you just have to know that it could happen again," said Rachel Malcom, whose husband serves in the Coast Guard in Rhode Island. "We're going to be playing catch-up, so I don't want to overspend."

President Donald Trump signed a short-term deal Friday to end the partial government shutdown, which caused 800,000 federal employees to miss two paychecks. The administration asked department heads to reopen offices in a "prompt and orderly manner."

Many parks — from the U.S. Virgin Islands to Minnesota — were glad to open their doors to weekend visitors.

John Anfinson, superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, said it felt great to tell his employees to open the Mississippi River Visitor's Center. He texted his manager and said "Roll up the gate!"

"They were just waiting for the green light," he said.

Park ranger Sharon Stiteler posted a video to Twitter that showed the center's gates opening with the word: "Weeeee!"

The visitor's center, located in the lobby of the Science Museum of Minnesota, saw 180 visitors in their first hour of operation, Anfinson said, and when he stopped by, the employees had "big smiles on their faces."

The National Park Service said it was working on reopening all of its parks as quickly as possible, but some parks may not open immediately depending on their staff size and complexity. The Virgin Islands National Park, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, the Wright Brothers National Memorial and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park were among the parks that reopened Saturday.

Mike Litterst, chief spokesman for the National Park Service, said the nation's more than 400 parks are reopening on a rolling schedule. Some of the parks that were partially open and accessible during the shutdown are expected to get back to full operations more quickly.

In the New York area, airport operations were returning to normal, just a day after LaGuardia Airport and Newark Liberty International Airport both experienced at least 90-minute delays in takeoffs because of the shutdown — which caused a ripple effect throughout the system.

Some parts of the government were taking a little more time to open up.

The Smithsonian museums and National Zoo in Washington planned to reopen to the public on Tuesday. Spokeswoman Linda St. Thomas said that until then, employees will check all audiovisual and interactive exhibits to make sure everything is working properly and curators will make a final check of the exhibits.

For families of workers, the government's reopening came with a mix of relief and fear. While those who were furloughed or required to work without pay will receive back pay, it's unclear when that will happen.

Crystal Simmons, whose husband serves in the Coast Guard in Connecticut, said it will likely take some time to process back pay, and then employees could be in the same situation again if another shutdown happens.

"I don't think I can really relax and go back to the way things were," she said.

Economy likely to pick up as government reopens

By JOSH BOAK
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The U.S. economy will likely resume its steady growth now that the government has reopened, though economists say some scars — for the nation and for federal workers — will take time to heal.

Most analysts estimate that the 35-day partial shutdown shaved a few tenths of a percentage point from annual economic growth in the first three months of 2019. They say growth should pick up in the coming months, though some of the money federal workers and contractors didn't spend in the past five weeks — on such items as movie tickets, restaurants and travel — will never be made up.

Having gone without two paychecks, many federal workers were forced to visit food banks or to borrow money. Federal workers will now receive back pay, though some contractors might not.

President Donald Trump agreed to reopen the government for three weeks after having forced the shutdown in hopes of compelling Democrats to approve billions for a wall on the Mexico border. Trump failed to secure any such money.

During the shutdown, a shortage of airport security and air traffic controllers disrupted travel at such major hubs as LaGuardia Airport in New York and Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey. The pressure on Trump to reopen the government intensified Friday after a delay of about 3,000 flights by midafternoon because six of 13



ANDREW HARRIN/AP

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, of California, listens to a reporter's question after signing a deal to reopen the government Friday. Analysts expect the economy to resume its steady growth with the shutdown ended.

air traffic controllers didn't show up to work at a critical center in Virginia.

S&P Global Ratings estimates that the economy lost \$6 billion because of the government closure — a sizable but relatively negligible sum in a \$19 trillion-plus U.S. economy.

"If the shutdown had lasted much longer, the economic impacts would have snowballed — travel problems, tax refunds, etc.," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities.

Still, the damage isn't likely to lift immediately. And some federal employees had expressed anxiety during the shutdown about the stability and security of their jobs. The most skilled or talented among them may be likelier to leave government service, a potential problem for an economy already facing worker shortages in some areas.

One lingering risk is if Trump chooses to shutter the government again after the three-week agreement lapses Feb. 15. Should that occur, it would sabotage consumer confidence and hurt the economy, predicted Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics.

"It would wipe out confidence," Zandi said.

Shutdown could cost DC area \$1.6B

By BRYAN MCCARTNEY
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The longest federal government shutdown will cost the Washington region more than \$1.6 billion in lost economic output according to one estimate, but its most significant long-term damage may be to the area's image and self-confidence.

The shuttering of a quarter of federal agencies tarnished the government's reputation as a reliable business partner and desirable employer, according to civic leaders, business owners and other analysts. It eroded morale of a quarter-million area federal workers and contractors who missed paychecks for more than a month.

And the fear is that it will prompt more firms and employees to seek work in the private sector, and hurt the area's allure to attract investment.

"Trust and hope are gone," said Emily Newlan, president of Hedegan Consulting in Gaithersburg, Md., which stands to lose more than \$20,000 in revenue from suspension of an administrative contract with the National Agricultural Library.

"Recruitment has already been hurt. People are going to look for other jobs," Newlan said. "They can say, 'I don't need this uncertainty.'"

Under a deal reached Friday between the White House and Congress, the entire government will be open for three weeks while talks continue on President Donald Trump's demand for funding for a wall

on the nation's southern border.

"Five hundred hours until we might need to do this all again," said Chuck Bean, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

The impact will linger even if the government stays open, he said.

"Effects are going to ripple through our communities long after it ends," Bean said. "Contractors did not get paid and many of them won't. Furloughed employees racked up credit card bills. Many local businesses won't get January back."

Regional economist Stephen Fuller, of George Mason University, estimates the loss of economic activity in January alone at \$1.6 billion. Additional losses from the final days of December, a holiday period, were "small but real," he said.

Advanced Management Strategies Group in Dumfries, Va., led by two service-disabled military veterans, suffered from suspension of a Federal Trade Commission contract.

"The impact to our financials is in the tens of thousands of dollars," President Jim O'Farrell said.

"It makes us feel abandoned," he said. "They have this program for us service-disabled, veteran small businesses, and at the same time they've taken it away."

O'Farrell's company, half of whose employees are veterans, advises federal agencies on how to operate more efficiently.

NATION

Suspect in 5 La. deaths caught in Va.

Associated Press

WARSW, Va. — A man suspected of killing his parents and three other people — including a girl he was dating — was arrested Sunday when he showed up at his grandmother's house in Virginia, a sheriff there said.

On Saturday, Dakota Theriot, 21, allegedly shot and killed three people — the woman believed to be his girlfriend, her brother and her father — in Louisiana's Livingston Parish before taking her father's truck, driving to neighboring Ascension Parish and shooting his parents, authorities said.

Theriot's grandmother, who

lives in Warsaw, Va., had checked into a hotel Saturday night because she feared he might show up at her house, Richmond County Sheriff Stephan B. Smith said in a phone interview. The woman asked authorities to check her home Sunday morning to make sure it was safe before she returned.

While deputies were there, Smith said, Theriot drove up. He had a gun on him but he dropped it and was taken into custody without incident, Smith said.

Theriot will be taken back to Ascension Parish to be booked on two counts of first-degree mur-

der, home invasion and illegal use of weapons, according to a statement by Ascension Parish Sheriff Bobby Webre and Livingston Parish Sheriff Jason Ard.

Smith said he believes the truck Theriot was driving when he arrived at his grandmother's house was the one taken in Louisiana.

Authorities have identified the victims in Livingston Parish as Billy Ernest, 43; Tanner Ernest, 17; and Summer Ernest, 20. Ard said Summer Ernest and Theriot were in a relationship and that Theriot had been living with her family for a few weeks.

Authorities earlier identified the other two victims as Ther-

ot's parents — Keith Theriot, 50, and Elizabeth Theriot, also 50, of Gonzales.

They were shot in their trailer on Saturday morning.

"The father was gravely injured at the time we found him and has since passed away," Webre said late Saturday. But before he died, Webre said authorities were able to get a "dying declaration from him, and only enough information to let us know that it was his son that committed this act."

Crystal DeYoung, Billy Ernest's sister, told The Associated Press that she believes Theriot had just started dating her niece, Summer Ernest.



Dakota Theriot

"My family met him last weekend at a birthday party and didn't get good vibes from him," DeYoung said. She said she wasn't sure how her niece and Theriot met, but that she believed the relationship was relatively new.

US diplomats allowed to remain in Venezuela

By MANUEL RUEDA
AND EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

Venezuela defused a potential showdown with the United States, suspending a demand that U.S. diplomats leave the country as Washington called on the world to "pick a side" in the South American nation's fast-moving crisis.

Socialist President Nicolas Maduro broke relations with the United States on Wednesday after the Trump administration and many other nations in the region recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido as Venezuela's interim president, a move that Maduro called a coup attempt.

Maduro gave U.S. diplomats three days to leave the country, but the Trump administration said it wouldn't obey, arguing that Maduro is no longer Venezuela's legitimate president. That set the stage for a showdown at the hill-top U.S. Embassy compound Saturday night, when the deadline was to expire.

But as the sun set on Venezuela's capital, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying Maduro's government was suspending the expulsion to provide a 30-day window for negotiating with U.S. officials about setting up a "U.S. interests office" in Venezuela and a similar Venezuelan office in the United States. The U.S. and Cuba had a similar arrangement for decades before the Obama administration renewed diplomatic relations with the communist-run island.

The State Department did not confirm the Venezuelan government's account, reiterating only that its priority remains the safety of its personnel and that it has no plans to close the embassy.

Earlier Saturday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told the U.N. Security Council: "Let me be 100 percent clear — President (Donald) Trump and I fully expect that our diplomats will continue to receive protections provided under the Vienna Convention. Do not test the United States on our resolve to protect our people."

In the Security Council meeting, critics and supporters of Maduro's government faced off in a reflection of the world's deep divisions over Venezuela, which is mired in political confrontation as well as an economic collapse that has caused millions to flee the country.

During the debate, which was requested by the U.S., Pompeo urged all nations to end Venezuela's "nightmare" and support Guaido.

"Now is the time for every other national to pick a side," Pompeo said. "No more delays, no more games. Either you stand with the forces of freedom or you're

in league with Maduro and his mayhem."

Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia charged that the Trump administration is trying "to engineer a coup" against Maduro. He said Venezuela doesn't threaten international peace and security, and he accused "extremist opponents" of Maduro's government of choosing "maximum confrontation," including the artificial creation of a parallel government.

Nebenzia urged Pompeo to say whether the U.S. will use military force.

Pompeo later told reporters who asked for a response, "I am not going to speculate or hypothesize on what the U.S. will do next."

Pompeo was accompanied to New York by Elliott Abrams, who was named a day earlier as the U.S. special representative for Venezuela. Abrams is a former assistant secretary of state for Latin America who worked at the White House when a 2002 coup in Venezuela briefly ousted Maduro's predecessor, the late Hugo Chavez.

On his first day on the job, Abrams met with exiled leaders



FERNANDO LLANO/AP

A member of Venezuela's opposition takes part in a demonstration outside the navy headquarters in Caracas, Venezuela, on Sunday. The opposition is attempting to pressure the armed forces to withdraw their support of President Nicolas Maduro and back self-declared interim leader Juan Guaido.

of Venezuela's opposition. He also spoke by phone with Guaido, the leader of Venezuela's opposition-controlled congress. Abrams reaffirmed U.S. support for Guaido as interim president, said Kimberly Breier, the current assistant secretary of state for the region.

The Security Council, the U.N.'s most powerful body, has not taken action on the Venezuelan crisis because of the divisions. The Security Council's five veto-holding permanent members could not unite behind a statement on Venezuela, presenting widely differing texts.

The leaders of two of those council nations — France and Britain — joined Spain and Germany to turn up the pressure on Maduro, saying Saturday that they would follow the U.S. and others in recognizing Guaido as president unless Venezuela calls a new presidential election within eight days.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, said that if there is no announcement of a new election soon, the 28-nation bloc "will take further actions, including on the issue of recognition of the country's leadership."



CLAUDIO CRUZ/AP

A supporter of Maduro holds a photo of him during a protest in front of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City on Saturday. The United States is urging all nations to support Guaido.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza dismissed the deadline.

"Europe is giving us eight days?" he asked the council.

"Where do you get that you have the power to establish a deadline or an ultimatum to a sovereign people. It's almost childlike."

Arreaza asked that someone show him where in Venezuela's constitution it says an individual can proclaim himself president.

Guaido says he is acting in accordance with two articles of the constitution that give the National Assembly president the right to hold power temporarily and call new elections.

The battle for control of Venezuela turned Sunday to the armed forces as Maduro, wearing tan military fatigues, attended army exercises, met with troops and watched as tanks fired into a hillside.

At the same time, Guaido supporters handed out leaflets to soldiers, urging them to reject the socialist leader and explaining how they could be eligible for amnesty if they help return Venezuela to democracy.

"We are waiting for you, the soldiers of Venezuela," Guaido told a news conference, urging the armed forces not to shoot fellow Venezuelans.

NATION

Poll shows most Americans back Trump probes

Many say they're uncertain about fairness of report

By SCOTT CLEMENT
The Washington Post

The American people have mixed feelings about investigating President Donald Trump, with clear majorities wanting newly empowered Democrats to dig into his personal finances and foreign ties but most believing that Congress should not begin impeachment proceedings, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll.

The public's cautiousness extends to its expectations for the forthcoming report from special counsel Robert Mueller, who has been examining ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 campaign. Half of Americans report they have "just some" confidence or none at all that the Mueller report will be fair and evenhanded, and 43 percent say they have at least a good amount of confidence in its fairness.

The survey was conducted Monday to Thursday, the day before Mueller's team unveiled criminal



SAUL MARTINEZ/Bloomberg

Demonstrators protest outside court in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where former Trump campaign adviser Roger Stone appeared Friday. Stone was been indicted as part of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, which a new poll found Americans have mixed feelings about.

charges against longtime Trump friend Roger Stone, accusing the political operative of lying, obstruction and witness tampering.

The poll results underscore the complex calculation ahead for Democrats and their new House leader, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, of California, as they balance calls from core supporters to aggressively investigate and possibly even impeach Trump against the

potential political backlash from other voters.

The impeachment question has gained attention in the days since the Democrats' House majority was sworn in, with party leaders insisting they will wait to consider their options after Mueller finishes his work and Trump declaring, "You can't impeach somebody that's doing a great job."

Six in 10 adults support the party

using its congressional authority to obtain and release Trump's tax returns, the survey shows.

Similar majorities support Democrats investigating suspected financial ties between Trump and foreign governments, the president's relationship and communications with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and possible collusion in the 2016 campaign.

A 46 percent plurality suspect Democrats will "go too far" in their inquiries of Trump, while just over one-third think they will handle it about right.

Partisans have long held sharply different views of Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election, but the new Post-ABC poll shows many Democrats are uncertain about the special counsel's final report. Just over 6 in 10 Democrats say they are confident the report will be fair and evenhanded, while slightly more than 3 in 10 report "just some" confidence or less.

The timeline for Mueller finishing his report is unknown, and it is uncertain how much of the report will be made public. Trump's attorney general nominee, William P. Barr, told senators during his confirmation hearing earlier this month that he would release a summary of the report but that he did not know "what will be

release-able" given department regulations.

In Congress, the poll shows House Democrats garner majority support from fellow partisans and independents for investigating possible collusion with Russia in 2016, as well as suspected financial ties between Trump and foreign governments.

Roughly 8 in 10 Democrats and about 6 in 10 independents support Democrats probing Trump's relationship with Putin, which has come under increased scrutiny following a Washington Post report that Trump concealed details of their face-to-face meetings.

Nearly three-quarters of Republicans oppose Democrats investigating possible collusion, while nearly two-thirds oppose investigating Trump's relationship with Putin and suspected financial ties with foreign governments.

Roughly one-third of Republicans, however, support investigations on these latter issues.

The Post-ABC poll was conducted by telephone Jan. 21-24 among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, with 65 percent reached on cellphones and 35 percent on landlines. Overall results have a 3.5-percentage-point margin of sampling error for the full sample.

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NATION

Undercover agents target cybersecurity watchdog

By RAPHAEL SATTNER
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The researchers who reported that Israeli software was used to spy on Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi's inner circle before his gruesome death are being targeted, in turn, by international undercover operatives, The Associated Press has found.

Twice in the past two months, men masquerading as socially conscious investors have lured members of the Citizen Lab internet watchdog group to meetings at luxury hotels to quiz them for hours about their work exposing Israeli surveillance and the details of their personal lives. In both cases, the researchers believe they were secretly recorded.

Citizen Lab Director Ron Deibert described the stunts as "a new low."

"We condemn these sinister, underhanded activities in the strongest possible terms," he said in a statement Friday. "Such a deceitful attack on an academic group like the Citizen Lab is an attack on academic freedom everywhere."

Who the operatives are working for remains a riddle, but their tactics recall those of undercover investigators who assume elaborate false identities to gather intelligence or compromising material on critics of powerful figures in government or business.

Citizen Lab, based out of the Munk School at the University of Toronto, has for years played a leading role in exposing state-backed hackers operating in places as far afield as Tibet, Ethiopia and Syria. Lately, the group has drawn attention for its repeated revelations about an Israeli surveillance software vendor called the NSO Group, a firm whose wares have been used by governments to target journalists, human rights activists in Panama and human rights activists in the Middle East.

In October, Citizen Lab reported that an iPhone belonging to one of Khashoggi's confidantes had been infected by the NSO's signature spy software only months before Khashoggi's grisly murder. The friend, Saudi dissident Omar Abdulaziz, would later claim that the hacking had exposed Khashoggi's private criticisms of the Saudi royal family to the Arab kingdom's spies and thus "played a major role" in his death.

In a statement, NSO denied having anything to do with the undercover operations targeting Citizen Lab "either directly or indirectly," and said it had neither hired nor asked anyone to hire private investigators to pursue the Canadian organization. "Any suggestion to the contrary is factually incorrect and nothing more than baseless speculation," NSO said.

NSO has long denied that its software was used to target Khashoggi, although it has refused to comment when asked whether it has sold its software to the Saudi government more generally.

A grilling

The first message reached Bahr Abdul Razzak, a Syrian refugee who works as a Citizen Lab researcher, on Dec. 6, when a man calling himself Gary Bowman got in touch via LinkedIn. The man described himself as a South African financial technology executive based in Madrid.

"I came across your profile and think that the work you've done helping Syrian refugees and your extensive technical background could be a great fit for our new initiative," Bowman wrote.

Abdul Razzak said he thought the proposal was a bit odd, but he eventually agreed to meet the man at Toronto's swanky Shangri-La Hotel on the morning of Dec. 18.

The conversation got weird very quickly, Abdul Razzak said.

Instead of talking about refugees, Abdul Razzak said, Bowman grilled him about his



PETROS KARADIAN/AP

Bahr Abdul Razzak, left, and his wife, Noura Al-Ameer, use their smartphones in Istanbul in August 2016. Abdul Razzak is one of two security researchers who have recently been targeted by a mysterious group of undercover operatives.

work for Citizen Lab and its investigations into the use of NSO's software. Abdul Razzak said Bowman appeared to be reading off cue cards, asking him if he was earning enough money and throwing out pointed questions about Israel, the war in Syria and Abdul Razzak's religiosity.

"Do you pray?" Abdul Razzak recalled Bowman asking. "Why do you write only about NSO?" "Do you write about it because it's an Israeli company?" "Do you hate Israel?"



Scott-Railton

A LinkedIn page, a handful of social media profiles and an entry in the business information platform Crunchbase. A reverse image search revealed that the profile picture of the man listed as FlameTech's chief executive, Mauricio Alonso, was a stock photograph.

"My immediate gut feeling was: 'This is a fake,'" said John Scott-Railton, one of Abdul Razzak's colleagues.

Scott-Railton flagged the incident to the AP, which confirmed that FlameTech was a digital facade.

Searches of the Orbis database of corporate records, which has data on some 300 million global companies, turned up no evidence of a Spanish firm called FlameTech or Flame Tech or any company anywhere in the world matching its description. Similarly, the AP found no record of FlameTech in Madrid's official registry or of a Gary Bowman in the city's telephone listings. An Orbis search for Alonso, the supposed chief executive, also drew a blank. When an AP reporter visited Madrid's Crystal Tower high-rise, where FlameTech claimed to have 2,700 square feet of office space, he could find no trace of the firm, and calls to the number listed on its website went unanswered.

The AP was about to publish a story about the curious company when, on Jan. 9, Scott-Railton received an intriguing message of his own.

This time the contact came not from Bowman, of FlameTech, but from someone who identified himself as Michel Lambert, a director at the Paris-based agricultural technology firm CPW-Consulting.

Lambert had done his homework. In his introductory email, he referred to Scott-Railton's early doctoral research on kite aerial photography—a mapping technique using kite-mounted cameras—and said he was "quite impressed."

"We have a few projects and clients coming up that could significantly benefit from implementing Kite Aerial Photography," he said.

A fiction

Like FlameTech, CPW-Consulting was a fiction. Searches of Orbis and the French commercial court registry Infogreffe turned up no trace of the supposedly Paris-based company or indeed of any Paris-based company bearing the acronym CPW. When the AP visited CPW's alleged office, there was no evidence of the company; the address was home to a mainly residential apartment building. Residents and the building's caretaker said they had never heard of the firm.

Whoever dreamed up CPW had taken steps to ensure the illusion survived a casual web search, but even those efforts didn't



"Lambert"

bear much scrutiny. The company had issued a help wanted ad, for example, seeking a digital mapping specialist for their Paris office, but Scott-Railton discovered that the language had been lifted almost word for word from an ad from an unrelated company seeking a mapping specialist in London.

A blog post touted CPW as a major player in Africa, but an examination of the author's profile suggests the article was the only one the blogger had ever written.

When Lambert suggested an in-person meeting in New York during a Jan. 19 phone call, Scott-Railton felt certain that Lambert was trying to set him up.

But Scott-Railton agreed to the meeting. He planned to lay a trap of his own.

Anyone watching Scott-Railton and Lambert laughing over wagu beef and lobster bisque at the Peninsula Hotel's upscale restaurant last Thursday afternoon might have mistaken the pair for friends.

In fact, the lunch was spy vs. spy. Scott-Railton had spent the night before trying to hide a homemade camera into his tie, he later told the AP, eventually settling for a GoPro action camera and several recording devices hidden about his person. On the table, Lambert had placed a large pen

in which Scott-Railton said he spotted a tiny camera lens peering out from an opening in the top.

Lambert didn't seem to be alone. At the beginning of the meal, a man sat behind him, holding up his phone as if to take pictures and then abruptly left the restaurant, having eaten nothing. Later, two or three men materialized at the bar and appeared to be monitoring proceedings.

Scott-Railton wasn't alone, either. A few tables away, two AP journalists were making small talk as they waited for a signal from Scott-Railton, who had invited the reporters to observe the lunch from nearby and then interview Lambert near the end of the meal.

A discussion

The conversation began with a discussion of kites, gossip about African politicians and a detour through Scott-Railton's family background. But Lambert, just like Bowman, eventually steered the talk to Citizen Lab and NSO.

"Work drama? Tell me. I like drama!" Lambert said at one point, according to Scott-Railton's recollection of the conversation. "Is there a big competition between the people inside Citizen Lab?" he asked later.

Like Bowman, Lambert appeared to be working off cue cards and occasionally made awkward conversational gambits. At one point he repeated a racist French expression, insisting it wasn't offensive. He also asked Scott-Railton questions about the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and whether he grew up with any Jewish friends. At another point, he asked whether there might not be a "racist element" to Citizen Lab's interest in Israeli spyware.

After dessert arrived, the AP reporters approached Lambert at his table and asked him why his company didn't seem to exist.

"I know what I'm doing," Lambert said, as he put his files—and his pen—into a bag. Then he stood up, bumped into a chair and walked off, saying, "Ciao" and waving his hand, before returning because he had neglected to pay the bill.

As he paced around the restaurant waiting for the check, Lambert refused to answer questions about who he worked for or why no trace of his firm could be found.

"I don't have to give you any explanation," he said. He eventually retreated to a back room and closed the door.

Who Lambert and Bowman really are isn't clear. Neither man returned emails or phone calls. The websites for both of their supposed companies went offline within hours of publication of this article, and chunks of information, including the men's last names, were removed from their respective LinkedIn profiles.

Despite their keen focus on NSO, the AP has found no evidence that the men were linked to the Israeli spyware merchant, which is adapting the article.

The kind of aggressive investigative tactics used by the mystery men who targeted Citizen Lab have come under fire in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein sexual abuse scandal. Black Cube, an Israeli private investigation firm, apologized after The New Yorker and other media outlets revealed that the company's operatives had used subterfuge and dirty tricks to help the Hollywood mogul suppress allegations of rape and sexual assault.

Scott-Railton and Abdul Razzak said they didn't want to speculate about who was involved. But both said they believed they were being steered toward making controversial comments that could be used to blacken Citizen Lab's reputation.

For example, "It could be they wanted me to say, 'Yes, I hate Israel,' or 'Yes, Citizen Lab is against NSO because it's Israeli,'" Abdul Razzak said.

NATION



PHOTOS BY CHARLIE NEIBERGALL/AP

U.S. Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, speaks during a town hall meeting Saturday in Primghar, Iowa. It was his first public event following his rebuke by the U.S. House over racist comments he made during an interview earlier in the month.

Iowa's King applauded at first event since House rebuke over remarks

BY SCOTT MCFETRIDGE
Associated Press

PRIMGHAR, Iowa — Constituents applauded Republican Rep. Steve King on Saturday at the Iowa congressman's first public event since being rebuked by his House colleagues over racist comments he made to a newspaper earlier this month.

King told the roughly 75 people who showed up for the first of 39 planned town hall meetings in his sprawling district that he doesn't adhere to a white supremacist ideology and he repeated his assertion that he's not racist.

The nine-term House member caused an uproar after he was quoted in a New York Times story saying, "White nationalism, white supremacism, Western civilization — how did that language become offensive?" King claimed his comments were taken out of context, but the House voted 424-1 to rebuke him, with King himself voting in favor of the resolution, and Republican leaders denied him any committee assignments.

Addressing what he called "the elephant in the room" in his opening remarks at Saturday's event, King expressed frustration that his comments about white nationalism and white supremacy in the Times interview led to even his fellow Republicans disowning him.

"It is stunning and astonishing to me that four words in a New York Times quote can outweigh 20-some years of public service, 20-some years of giving you my word every day," King said. "And not one soul has stood up and said I've ever lied to you or misrepresented anything. Not one soul has stood up and said Steve King has ever acted in a racist fashion, that he ever discriminated against anybody."

King has long been known for making caustic comments, especially on issues related to race and



Rosie Osterberg, center, of Spencer, Iowa, listens to King speak Saturday.

immigration. Shortly before the November election, The Washington Post reported that King met in Austria with the far-right Freedom Party, which has Nazi ties. King said the meeting was with business leaders, including one person from the Freedom Party, but the Post stood by its story.

Although King's recent comments drew a relatively large media contingent to Saturday's meeting, none of the constituents who were on hand said anything critical about the controversy and a couple expressed their support, telling King they think he's doing a great job. In the few instances in which King's history of insensitive comments and his most recent statements arose, the audience seemed supportive, and they stood twice during the gathering to applaud him.

People mostly wanted to talk about the issues of governing, asking King about efforts to allow more corn-based biofuels in gasoline, economic development and changes that would allow people to temporarily enter the country legally to work on cattle operations. King didn't take questions

from reporters.

Such town hall meetings have been unusual for King, who for years declined to hold them. He argued that he could meet with constituents more effectively by speaking with them privately rather than at public gatherings, which he claims would be dominated by opponents from outside the district.

However, after his narrow victory over Democrat J.D. Scholten, who for months traveled in a motor home throughout the district, King announced that he would hold town hall meetings in all of the district's 39 counties.

Only two months after King's narrow win, he drew a conservative and likely well-funded Republican primary challenger in state Sen. Randy Feenstra, an assistant Republican legislative leader known for pushing a large tax cut through the 2018 Legislature. Last week, Woodbury County supervisor Jeremy Taylor, a former state legislator, announced he'd also seek the 4th District GOP nomination. At least two others have said they are considering running in the Republican primary.

Dozen immigrant workers at Trump golf course fired

BY BERNARD CONDON
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A dozen immigrant workers at one of President Donald Trump's golf clubs in New York who are in the U.S. illegally were fired this month even though managers had known about their legal status for years, a lawyer for the workers said Saturday.

As the president railed during the partial government shutdown against immigrants coming into the country illegally, a manager at the Trump National Golf Club in Westchester County called a dozen immigrant workers into a room one by one Jan. 18 and fired them, said lawyer Anibal Romero.

Many of them had worked at the club for a dozen or more years, he said, and managers knew they had submitted phony documents but looked the other way.

"This is bogus. People have been there for 12, 13, 14 years," said Romero. He added, referring to one of the president's sons, "One had the keys to Eric Trump's bedroom."

The firings come after workers at another Trump club in New Jersey came forward last month to say managers there had hired them knowing they were in the country illegally, and had even helped one obtain phony documents.

The crackdown at the New York club was first reported by The Washington Post.

The Associated Press left messages with The Trump Organization seeking comment. Eric Trump depicted the firings to the Post as a normal course of business.

"We are making a broad effort to identify any employee who has given false and fraudulent documents to unlawfully gain employ-

ment," he said. "Where identified, any individual will be terminated immediately."

He added that "the system is broken."

Trump has repeatedly cast the millions of immigrants in the

country illegally as a

scourge on the health of

the economy, taking jobs

from American citizens.

He has said they also

bring drugs and crime

over the border.

Trump turned over day-to-day

management of his business

to Eric and his other adult son,

Donald Jr., when he took the oath

of office two years ago. The Trump

Organization owns or manages 17

golf clubs around the world.

One man who was fired, a former

maintenance worker from Mexico

hired in 2005, told The Post that he started to cry when he

was told of the news and pleaded

with management to reconsider.

"I told them they needed to consider

us," said Gabriel Sedano. "I'd given

the best of myself to this job."

Romero, who also represents

immigrant workers at Trump's

golf course in Bedminster, N.J.,

said he has called New York state

authorities and the FBI to look

into hiring practices at the New

York club.

"There was a don't ask, don't

tell attitude at the club," he said.

"We are demanding a full

investigation."

Trump donates \$100K from salary to alcoholism research

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump donated his salary from the third quarter of 2018 to the federal agency that researches alcoholism and alcohol-related problems.

The White House said Trump donated \$100,000 to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Alcoholism is a personal issue for the president. His older brother, Fred Jr., died in 1981 after struggling with alcoholism, and

the president has said he learned from his brother's experience.

Trump pledged as a candidate in 2016 to not accept the \$400,000 annual presidential salary he would be due if elected.

By law, he must be paid, so Trump has donated the quarterly payments to various federal departments and agencies.

The departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Transportation and Veterans Affairs, among others, have accepted Trump's donations.

NATION

Grand Canyon tribe enacts tour guide ban

Escorts are restricted on land known for its picturesque waterfalls

By FELICIA FONSECA
Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — The thousands of tourists who travel to a remote Native American reservation deep in the Grand Canyon each year to camp near a series of picturesque, blue-green waterfalls will have to do so without the benefit of professional guides.

The Havasupai Tribe has decided not to allow outfitters to escort visitors this year down the long, winding path that leads to its small, roadless reservation and on to its main tourist draw: towering waterfalls that cascade into swimming holes that are warm year-round.

Tourists can visit the waterfalls, either by reserving a room at the tribe's only lodge or by snapping up a coveted permit for one of its hundreds of camping spots scattered amid a creek. But starting in February, they'll have to find their own way to the reservation's waterfalls and caves, and carry their own food and gear.

Abbie Fink, a spokeswoman for the Havasupai Tribe, said the Tribal Council's decision isn't a reflection on the outfitters. Rather, she said the tribe wanted to manage all tourist traffic itself.

"It's not solving a problem. It's returning the enterprise to the control of the tribe," she told The Associated Press.

For years, the tribe has set aside spots for tour companies, which often bought permits in bulk. The outfitters paid a licensing fee of several thousand dollars, and some had elaborate setups with gourmet meals, inflatable couches and massage therapists. Most brought just the essentials.

Fink couldn't say exactly how much tour guides paid or how many licenses have been issued in the past. She said the Tribal Council would re-evaluate outfitter licenses for 2020.

The tribe relies heavily on tourism and estimates that between February and November, it gets 30,000 to 40,000 visitors per year to its reservation deep in a gorge west of Grand Canyon National Park that's accessible only by foot or helicopter, or by riding a horse or mule. The tribe does maintenance in the campground and on the trails in December and January.

The tribe doesn't allow day hikes, so visitors wanting to take in its waterfalls and other sights must reserve overnight trips in the campground or at the sole lodge.

Rooms in the lodge, which can be booked only by phone, are sold out for the rest of this year. Reservations for 2020 start June 1.

Permits for 2019 camping spots become available online Feb. 1 and are expected to sell out in minutes. People on social media have been strategizing for months about how to boost their chances, including by setting up an account early, recruiting friends and family to try to book a trip and repeatedly refreshing multiple internet browsers.

The permits are \$100 per person per night Monday through Thursday, and \$125 a night Friday through Sunday, slight increases over last year. The tribe grants about 300 camping permits a day, Fink has said.

Adam Henry, co-owner of Discovery Treks, books between 100 and 200 people



BOB DAUGHERTY/AP

Water from one of five waterfalls on Havasu Creek tumble 210 feet on the Havasupai Tribe's reservation in a southeastern branch of the Grand Canyon near Supai, Ariz., in 1997. A Native American tribe has banned tour guides for visitors to the waterfalls.

on the Havasupai trip each year but has had to stick to offering trips in other spots of the Grand Canyon. He says that's not always welcome news for tourists intent on venturing to the waterfalls.

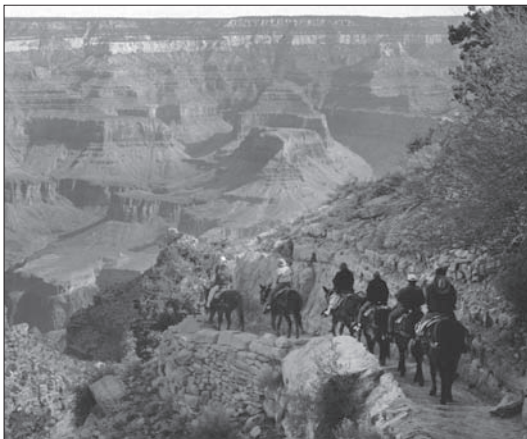
The hike takes tourists 8 miles down a winding trail through desert landscape before they reach the first waterfall. Then comes the village of Supai, where 600 tribal members live year-round. Another 2 miles down the trail is the campground with waterfalls on both ends.

"The blue-green water is what people want to see," Henry said. "It's certainly a significant bummer for people who aren't going to be able to get out there on their own."

Christine Miller, who works with the tour guide company Wildland Trekking, said tourists can find packing lists online and videos on Havasupai to help plan their trip. The advantage to having a tour guide is knowing how to reach the sights off the main trail, including other waterfalls, caves and swimming pools.

"There are not really any good maps out there to tell you when to cross, when not to cross" the creek, she said.

The tribe temporarily suspended licenses for outfitters in 2016 in part to review the impact that supplies loaded onto pack animals had on the animals and the trail. Fink did not respond to questions about what came out of that review.



JEFF ROBBINS/AP

A mule train winds its way down the Bright Angel trail at Grand Canyon National Park, Ariz., on March 27, 1996.

WORLD

Philippine cathedral bombing kills at least 20, wounds 111

Associated Press

JOLO, Philippines — Two bombs that exploded minutes apart tore through a Roman Catholic cathedral on a southern Philippine island where Muslim militants are active, killing at least 20 people and wounding 111 others during a Sunday Mass, officials said.

Witnesses said the first blast inside the Jolo cathedral in the provincial capital sent churchgoers, some of them wounded, to stampede out the main door. Army troops and police posted outside were rushing in when the second bomb went off about a minute later near the main entrance, causing more deaths and

injuries. The military was checking a report that the second explosive device may have been attached to a parked motorcycle.

The initial explosion scattered the wooden pews inside the main hall and blasted window glass panels, and the second bomb hurled human remains and debris across a town square fronting the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, witnesses said. Cellphone signals were cut off in the first hours after the attack. The witnesses who spoke to The Associated Press refused to give their names or were busy at the scene of the blasts.

Police said at least 20 people died

and 111 were wounded, correcting an earlier toll due to double counting. The fatalities included 15 civilians and five soldiers. Among the wounded were 17 soldiers, two police officers, two coast guard members and 90 civilians.

Troops in armored carriers sealed off the main road leading to the church while vehicles transported the dead and wounded to the town hospital. Some casualties were evacuated by air to nearby Zamboanga city.

"I have directed our troops to heighten their alert level, secure all places of worship and public places at once and initiate proactive security measures to thwart



WESMINCOM ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES/AP

A soldier views the scene inside a Roman Catholic cathedral in Jolo, the capital of Sulu province in the southern Philippines, after two bombs exploded Sunday there.

hostile plans," Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said in a statement.

"We will pursue to the ends of the earth the ruthless perpetrators behind this dastardly crime until every killer is brought to justice and put behind bars. The law will give them no mercy,"

the office of President Rodrigo Duterte said in Manila.

It said that "the enemies of the state boldly challenged the government's capability to secure the safety of citizens in that region. The [Armed Forces of the Philippines] will rise to the challenge and crush these godless criminals."

Fears of 2nd dam collapse in Brazil prompt evacuations

Associated Press

BRUMADINHO, Brazil — Brazilian officials on Sunday suspended the search for potential survivors of a dam collapse that has killed at least 40 people amid fears that another nearby dam owned by the same company was also at risk of breaching.

Authorities were evacuating several neighborhoods in the southeastern city of Brumadinho that were within range of the B6 dam owned by the Brazilian mining company Vale. There was no immediate word on how many people were evacuated.

"Leave here! This is at risk!" police officials told firefighters in a lower-lying area. "Within a little while, more mud will fall."

The firefighters had been working to extract a cow found alive in the mud, but they pulled back on the order of police, leaving the animal.

While the ground search was stopped, helicopters continued to fly over the area, possibly so they would not be hit if another collapse happened.



ANDRE PENNER/AP

A couple with missing relatives look at the flooded area after a dam collapsed in Brumadinho, Brazil, on Saturday. An estimated 300 people were still missing and authorities expected the death toll to rise.

Caroline Steinfeld, who was evacuated, said she heard warning sirens on Sunday but no such

alert came on Friday, when the first dam collapsed.

"I only heard shouting, people

saying to get out. I had to run with my family to get to higher ground, but there was no siren," she said,

adding that a cousin was still unaccounted for.

Even before the latest setbacks, hope that loved ones had survived a tsunami of iron ore mine waste from Friday's dam collapse in the area was turning to anguish and anger over the increasing likelihood that many of the hundreds of people missing had died.

Company employees at the mining complex were eating lunch Friday afternoon when the first dam gave way. By Saturday night, when authorities called off rescue efforts until daybreak, the dam break toll stood at 40 dead, with up to 300 people estimated to be missing.

All day Saturday, helicopters flew low over areas encased by a river of mud and mining waste as firefighters dug frantically to get into buried structures.

"I'm angry. There is no way I can stay calm," said Sonia Patima da Silva as she tried to get information about her son, who had worked at Vale for 20 years. "My hope is that they be honest. I want news, even if it's bad."

French protest violence of 'yellow vests'

Associated Press

PARIS — Hundreds of people wearing red scarves marched through Paris on Sunday to protest acts of violence and vandalism that took place during the largely peaceful "yellow vest" movement's two months of anti-government demonstrations.

The "red scarves" demonstration came amid growing divisions around the yellow vest phenomenon, which has led to rioting in Paris and other cities, exposed deep discontent with President Emmanuel Macron and prompted national soul-searching.

Protest damage to the Arc de Triomphe monument in Paris in December was a turning point for many of the counterprotesters at

Sunday's march.

"We don't share all the demands expressed by the yellow vest movement — for instance, demands about overthrowing the government, brutalizing institutions," said Laurent Segnis, a member of Macron's centrist Republic on the Move party.

Others lamented their sense that the movement, which appeared in mid-November as a grass-roots response to a fuel tax, is radicalizing as it nears the end of a third month.

Ten people have died in road incidents since the protests started on Nov. 17, and about 2,000 people have been injured. The weekly protests in Paris routinely descend into clashes between riot police and participants who throw

rocks at officers and set fires in the streets.

The yellow vest movement, which includes people across France's political spectrum, sees Macron's government as favoring the wealthy. Many movement supporters dismissed the "red scarves" as Macron stooges, though the president's party didn't officially take part in the counterdemonstrations.

Some 69,000 people nationwide took part Saturday in the 11th week of yellow vest protests, down from more than 80,000 during the previous two weekends, according to the French Interior Ministry.

On Sunday, French police were investigating how a prominent yellow vest protester, Jerome Rdrigues, suffered an eye injury



KAMIL ZHINIGULI/AP

Protesters organized by groups calling themselves the "red scarves" and "blue vests" rally in Paris on Sunday to counter demonstrations by the "yellow vest" movement that have sometimes turned violent.

In Paris. Video images show Rdrigues collapsed on the ground Saturday near the Bastille monu-

ment, where protesters throwing projectiles clashed with police seeking to disperse them.

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OPINION

Empower shutdown-halting workers to act again

By JON HEALEY

Los Angeles Times

Friday morning at LaGuardia Airport in New York City, the traveling public felt the full bite of a federal government shutdown. Perhaps that's why the shutdown has come to an end — for now, at least.

President Donald Trump announced Friday he would sign a bill to fund the shuttered departments and agencies for three weeks while he continues to tussle with congressional Democrats over funding to build a bigger, longer wall on the U.S.-Mexico border. As a result, about 800,000 federal workers who've missed two paychecks — more than half of whom have been required to work during the shutdown — should soon be collecting back pay.

Democrats won this round. They had insisted throughout the shutdown they would negotiate over the wall only after the government reopened, and that's what the new agreement calls for. Trump, by contrast, had sought to use the shutdown as a way to force Democrats to bargain over a project that many of them strongly oppose.

The two sides had been at an impasse until Thursday, when the Senate voted on two proposals — one by Republicans, one by Democrats — to end the shutdown. Negotiations resumed after that, then Friday brought the momentous Senate vote. Yet the Federal Aviation Administration temporarily stopped flights from landing at LaGuardia because of a shortage of air traffic controllers, resulting in delays that rippled to other East Coast airports.

Evidently, some controllers had not been mollified by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross' suggestion that they take out loans rather than relying on fido banks until their paychecks resume. Ross, a former in-

vestment tycoon, no doubt would have an easier time getting good terms on a loan. Not that he'd need one.

Sick employees were a problem at several other airports, too, and were even more common at the Internal Revenue Service. According to The Washington Post, at least 14,000 employees at the tax agency missed work last week. Good thing it's not a busy time for them! Oh, wait ...

I understand why it would be insane to spend even a day without controllers, troops, Transportation Security Administration screeners, Coast Guard officers, FBI and Border Patrol agents and a laundry list of other truly essential workers employed by the federal government. What I don't understand is why we tolerate a system that lets elected officials fail to do their jobs. I mean, if the government — with no consequences for anyone in power. Instead, the effects are felt by everyone else, from the workers whose pay is delayed indefinitely (or possibly lost, in the case of idled contractors) to the taxpayers who aren't getting the services they're putting up with.

When the consequences for the public are too great to ignore, things happen. If essential employees were idled by a shutdown, we probably wouldn't have shutdowns — and we certainly wouldn't have any that lasted for days, let alone weeks.

You must argue that voting will hold Trump, who claimed responsibility for this shutdown before trying to pin the blame on Democrats, accountable in 2020. History suggests that they will have forgotten by then — look, for example, at what happened after congressional Republicans shut down the government in 2013 over a similar effort to defund "Obamacare."

Congress could conceivably amend the Anti-Deficiency Act to allow agencies to

pay essential employees even if Congress hasn't appropriated them the money to do so. But that would only give lawmakers and the president more leeway to engage in the sort of budgetary " hostage-taking that has become all too common in Washington.

Trump's supporters insist that he had to shut down the government to gain leverage over Democrats who refused to negotiate over the president's demand for a bigger, longer wall on the southern border. That's a bit like saying, "I needed to kidnap you, god because you refused to negotiate over my demand to build a garage on your lawn." Besides that, the shutdown hasn't given Trump leverage, it's only aggravated the public and driven down his approval ratings. He needed the shutdown to end more than Democrats did.

Even the temporary-funding bill suggests this sorry episode may soon end. The way the system is set up, however, we could easily have another shutdown if there's no deal on border security in three weeks, or if there's another impasse when the fiscal year ends Sept. 30, or if the weeks leading up to the 2020 election. That's just nuts.

Air traffic controllers are prohibited by law from striking, and their union disavowed any "collective" move to harm the system Friday. At the same time, the union said how the shutdown has added stress to what's already a high-stress job.

As blogger Jon Ostrower pointed out Friday, controllers may be much more concerned about tending to their immune systems the next time they're asked to work while their paycheck is on hold. That's a recipe for chaos, but maybe the threat of chaos is what we need to get the president and Congress to do their jobs.

Jon Healey is the Los Angeles Times' deputy editorial page editor.

Items have their Thatcher in Warren, if they dare

By GEORGE F. WILL

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON Margaret Thatcher's description of herself as a "conviction politician" alarmed some Britons but delighted others because her convictions were incompatible with the flaccid centrist consensus that had produced their nation's 1970s stagnation. In 1979, voters rolled the dice, sending her to Downing Street. In Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Democrats' best hope, has suggested that they take out loans rather than relying on fido banks until their paychecks resume. Ross, a former in-

When elected leader of Britain's Conservatives, Thatcher, disgusted by a colleague's rhetorical mush about a glorious "middle way," slammed onto a table Friedrich Hayek's tome "The Constitution of Liberty" and exclaimed, "This is what we believe!" Today, with a forthrightness perhaps more bracing than prudent, Warren advocates a radical agenda that is approximately Thatcherism — capitalism invigorated — inverted. Furthermore, Warren bristles with a progressive's version of Thatcherism, namely that not one of her Conservative colleagues to say that "she can't look at a British institution without hitting it with her handbag."

Warren is too busy inveighing against "corruption" to define it precisely, but she probably means what economists call rent-seeking, which in the context of politics means bending government power for private advantage, either by conferring advantages on oneself or imposing disadvantages on competitors. Although Warren's inveighing is virtuous, her program would substantially exacerbate the problem by loosening government involvement in the allocation of wealth and opportunity.

She was a registered Republican from 1991 to 1996 because "I thought that those were the people who best supported markets." Today, she favors "big structural change." Her Accountable Capitalism Act would produce the semi-nationalization of large corporations, with federal charters requiring (among other things) 40 percent of their directors to be elected by employees. Such accountable-to-government (not to markets) corporations must have "a material positive impact on society ... when taken as a whole." This gaseous metric will be defined and enforced by government. Such federalization of corporate law would inevitably be the thin end of an enormous wedge of government control, crowding out market signals. As would her Climate Risk Disclosure Act, American Housing and Economic Mobility Act, and Affordable and Sustainable Communities Act.

What law professor Richard Epstein calls Warren's "supertititious socialism" would, he says, "likely lead to the largest flight of capital from the United States in history." Foreign investors — domestic ones, too — will not want to put wealth in corporations with government agendas of governments. And the agendas of various "stakeholders" deemed to have rights comparable to those of shareholders who actually own corporations, and to whom corporate directors have the fiduciary duty to maximize their shares' value.

Warren exemplifies progressive government's fundamental belief in disinterested government that, unlike human beings (except government employees), has motives as pure as the driven snow. She should read the 2003 essay "What Is Public Choice Theory?," wherein Nobel laureate James M. Buchanan uses economic reasoning to determine how incentives influence behavior — to

demystify politics. He argued politicians and bureaucrats seek to maximize power the way many people in the private sector maximize monetary profits.

Warren leaves her sentimentality with nostalgia. "When I was a kid, a minimum-wage job in America would support a family of three. It would pay a mortgage, keep the utilities on and put food on the table." Well. The Adam Smith Institute's Tim Worstall suggests some pertinent arithmetic: When Warren was 10 in 1959, the federal hourly minimum wage (\$1, which was \$8.55 in 2018 dollars) for 2,000 hours a year (40 hours a week for 50 weeks) would provide \$2,000 a year, below the poverty threshold (\$2,324) for a family of three.

Wielding one of President Donald Trump's favorite adjectives ("rigged"), Warren says that today's government is "rigged" in favor of the rich. Sprawling, complex, opaque, redistributionist government usually does. It redistributes wealth upward to those who can manipulate its pulleys and levers. By multiplying those devices, Warren would make government even more regressive.

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OPINION

Trump wants to leave Syria. Easier said than done.

By DOYLE MCMAUS
Los Angeles Times

WHEN President Donald Trump abruptly announced on Dec. 19 that he was pulling all U.S. troops out of Syria, he suggested they were already on the way home. "We have won against ISIS," the president said, referring to Islamic State. "Our boys, our young women, our men—they're all coming back, and they're coming back now."

His "now" was premature. More than a month later, the 2,000 or so U.S. military personnel remain in eastern Syria and administration policy remains as much a muddle as ever. American diplomats are still haggling with Turkey over the conditions under which U.S. troops will come out, and the Pentagon has announced no timeline for their removal.

The holdup isn't merely logistical. Like it or not—and the president often sounds as if he doesn't—the United States has significant interests in Syria. Despite Trump's claim, ISIS appears stubbornly alive, if not well. This month, its militants launched two suicide attacks against U.S. troops in a week that killed four Americans. Iran, which Trump considers a malevolent enemy, has moved thousands of forces into Syria and could try to grab territory abandoned by U.S. troops as it seeks to further its influence.

The latest war within a war, between Iran and Israel, has now escalated sharply. On Jan. 21, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his air force had struck Iran-linked targets in Syria "hundreds of times."

Trump's initial order to remove U.S. troops was impulsive at best, taking senior aides by surprise and without any evident support from the Pentagon or his national security team. His decision prompted Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to resign in protest due, in part, to concerns that Turkey would use the pullout to slaughter Kurdish fighters who have been stalwart U.S. allies but oppose the regime in Ankara.

"There's no plan for what's coming next," Brett McGurk, the former U.S. diplomat who ran the coalition against ISIS but also resigned early over the Syria decision, complained Jan. 20 on CBS' "Face the Nation."

Aides have scrambled to persuade the president that an orderly withdrawal of 2,000 troops and their equipment will require more than 30 days, and they appear to have succeeded. By all reports, only a few facilities have been damaged.

"I never said we are doing it that quickly," Trump said on Jan. 6, or 18 days after he said they were "coming back now."

But the president and his advisers still haven't solved a more complex problem: finding a post-withdrawal strategy that protects U.S. interests. So far, administration officials merely say they will pursue

the same goals by working through allies. It's hard to see that as a blueprint for success.

In a recent speech in Cairo, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said U.S. forces would continue to fight ISIS with U.S. and coalition airstrikes, but on the ground "we're looking for our partners to do more." U.S. officials long have pleaded with Saudi Arabia and other Arab allies to deploy a multinational force in Syria, to no avail. There is no capable ground force available.

Organizing a new military coalition "takes American leadership and American presence—and we've just told the world that we're not going to be present," McGurk said.

In his Cairo speech, Pompeo reaffirmed another ambitious goal, saying the administration intended "to expel every last Iranian boot" from Syria. In Pompeo's formulation, the Trump administration will push the Iranians out through diplomatic pressure and work with the United Nations—a body Trump has regularly scorned—"to bring peace and stability to the long-suffering Syrian people." If President Barack Obama had said that three years ago, then-Rep. Pompeo would have dismissed it as meaningless rhetoric.

Still, when it comes to Iran's presence, the Trump administration has the next best thing to a strategy: the Israeli air force. Netanyahu and Israeli military leaders decided more than a year ago that Iran's forces posed a threat to their north-

ern border, and they escalated airstrikes against Iranian military units there. Until then, Israeli warplanes had targeted Hezbollah, the Iran-backed Lebanese militia, but mostly avoided Iranian forces.

Now Israeli officials are publicizing their military offensive in a clear message to Tehran. "Don't get the idea you can move in just because the Americans are moving out," a foreign policy expert in Jerusalem explained. That's not quite expelling every Iranian boot, but it's more concrete than what the White House has offered.

Let's be clear: There's nothing inherently wrong with pulling U.S. troops out of Syria as long as it's part of a well-crafted strategy. Obama reluctantly deployed troops in 2015 and planned to keep them in Syria only long enough to defeat ISIS. On that count, Trump agreed. The question bedeviling the Trump administration is how to continue pursuing American interests in Syria—the suppression of terrorism and the containment of Iran—after complying with the president's order to leave. Better to settle on more plausible goals and recognize that the U.S. will still be engaged in a long twilight war in Syria—even after our troops are gone.

Trump's withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria isn't happening as quickly as he wanted. The administration has slowed the withdrawal for fear that it would allow Iran to expand its influence. An escalating war between Iran and Israel only heightens the stakes.

VA misleads vets on non-VA emergency care, suit contends

By TOM PHILPOTT
Special to Stars and Stripes

VETERANS who flooded the Department of Veterans Affairs with reimbursement claims for private-sector emergency care, in the wake of their appeals court victory in the Staab case, have been getting misinformation from the VA that likely discourages them from appealing wrongly denied claims or from supplying VA with follow-up documents to complete their claims.

That's the contention of a new lawsuit filed Jan. 1 by attorneys led by the nonprofit National Veterans Legal Services Program, which is trying to force the VA to heed the Staab decision and reimburse tens of thousands of veterans for non-VA emergency care that their own health insurance covered only in part.

As reported here in November, an initial lawsuit filed by NVLSP, which still pending, alleges VA wrongdoing on another issue related to Staab claimants. It contends VA wrote an implementing regulation for Staab but that it was too tight, denying thousands of veterans non-VA emergency care reimbursements, and saves the VA billions of dollars, on precisely the type of claim the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims ruled that Congress has wanted VA to pay since 2010.

The new lawsuit charges that letters sent the past year to thousands of veterans, denying a Staab-related claim or seeking more information to reach a claim decision, have contained "an incorrect statement of law," language that contradicts what the appeals court concluded in Staab.

It's beyond my comprehension how they could do what they did, deny the classes of veterans affected — by the unlawful regula-

MILITARY UPDATE

tion and the inaccurate VA mailings — are nearly identical.

Government attorneys are challenging that joint class petition and asking the appeals court for more time to prepare their response brief to the first lawsuit, which is due by Feb. 4. Until then the government's arguments are not known.

The VA for decades has reimbursed for outside emergency care for VA-enrolled veterans only if they have no other health insurance. The VA interpreted the law on non-VA emergency care as requiring it to deny claims for outside emergency care if a veteran had alternative health insurance — through an employer or their spouse's employer or even with Medicare — to cover part of the cost.

Because this left many thousands of veterans every year with large out-of-pocket costs, Congress modified the statute nine years ago. The VA, however, wrote implementing regulations in 2012 that continued to direct claim processors to deny reimbursement if veterans had insurance to cover part of their emergency costs.

Three years ago, in Staab, the appeals court ruled VA was ignoring the plain meaning of the 2010 law change that was intended to bring financial relief to veterans stuck with out-of-pocket costs for private-sector emergency care.

The VA pondered an appeal of Staab to the U.S. Supreme Court but, given that the appeals court ruled unanimously and that the legislative history was clear, a reversal seemed unlikely. In 2017, then-VA Secretary David Shulkin conceded as much and assured Congress the VA would rewrite regulations to comply with Staab even though, he noted, it would expose VA to billions of dollars in additional medical costs, both on claims refilled by veterans and in payment of future claims.

The VA later released a new interim regulation last January, and veterans seeking

reimbursement for Staab-related claims began to see again they routinely were denied. The NVLSP investigated and determined the regulations, which became final in March, still prohibited reimbursement for the bulk of out-of-pocket emergency medical expenses veterans paid if they had alternative health insurance plans.

The 2010 law stated that veterans with other insurance are responsible for "copayments and similar payments." The revised regulation, however, took that phrase and expanded it with devastating effect to "copayments, deductibles, coinsurance and similar payments." The practical effect is veterans with insurance remain responsible for almost every emergency cost their insurance won't cover.

Stichman called the maneuver "outrageous," and it's clear that can't be what Congress intended. The phrase "co-payment and similar payments" means fixed and modest charges, he said. The VA changed that meaning to ensure veterans, and not VA, still got stuck with almost every cost their insurance plan won't cover.

The plaintiff in that initial lawsuit is Coast Guard veteran James J. Wolfe, who needed an emergency appendectomy but the nearest VA hospital was a three-hour drive. Because of the way VA wrote its 2018 regulation, Wolfe had to pay nearly \$2,600 in medical costs that her own health insurance didn't cover.

Stichman links to represent thousands of other veterans too who have seen Staab-related claims denied since the revised regulation took effect.

The plaintiff in the second lawsuit is disabled Navy veteran Peter Boerschinger, 79, who had severe pneumonia and congestive heart failure. He was taken to a VA hospital had closed its emergency room and directed patients to seek outside care. Because Boerschinger had other health insurance, VA refused to pay \$1,340 in charges that his own insurance also wouldn't cover.

The VA letter denying his claim, which was identical to letters sent to thousands of veterans with Staab-related claims over the

last year, left Boerschinger confused as to whether it was worthwhile to appeal. The letter misled him by listing among criteria that must be met to qualify for reimbursement that the "veteran have no coverage under a health plan contract."

Though the Staab ruling had directed VA no longer to use alternative insurance "as a reason to turn people down," Stichman said, it continues to share that "incorrect statement of law... whenever they send veterans a letter about their claim." This practice "creates a disincentive for veterans to obtain third-party health insurance [and] runs directly counter to the Staab case ruling."

The lawsuits, now combined, urge the appeals court to regard both Wolfe and Boerschinger as representing classes of similarly situated individuals. All those represented by Wolfe have been or will be harmed by an unlawful regulation. All those Boerschinger represents have been or will be harmed by correspondence with the incorrect statement that a criterion for reimbursement of non-VA emergency costs is "no coverage under a health plan contract."

The lawsuit urges the court to declare the 2018 regulation "invalid to the extent it forbids the VA from reimbursing veterans for coinsurance and deductible payments incurred while visiting non-VA hospitals for emergency treatment." Also, it asks the court to invalidate all decisions in the past year denying "reimbursement of medical expenses deemed to be part of the veteran's deductible or coinsurance," or denying expenses because the veteran was covered under a health contract.

The lawsuit further asks the court to order the VA secretary to readjudicate all of these reimbursement claims, this time using a proper interpretation of the 2010 law as the court first required with its Staab decision.

Send comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centerville, VA 20120; email mlupdate@aol.com; or Twitter: @Military_Update.

WORLD

Amid tensions, world remembers 1.1M killed at WWII death camp

By VANESSA GERA
Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — The world marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Sunday amid a revival of hate-inspired violence and signs that younger generations know less and less about the genocide of Jews, Roma and others during World War II.

In Poland, which was under Nazi German occupation during the war, a far-right activist who has been imprisoned for burning the effigy of a Jew gathered with other nationalists Sunday outside the former death camp of Auschwitz ahead of official ceremonies remembering the 1.1 million people murdered there.

Since last year's observances, a French Holocaust survivor, Mireille Knoll, 85, was fatally stabbed in Paris and 11 Jews were gunned down in a Pittsburgh synagogue during Shabbat services, the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history.

Human Rights First, a U.S. organization, recalled those killings and warned that "today's threats do not come solely from the fringe."

"In places such as Hungary and Poland, once proudly democratic nations, government leaders are traveling the road to authoritarianism," said Ira Forman, the group's senior adviser for combating anti-Semitism. "As they do so, they are distorting history to spin a fable about their nations and the Holocaust."

Polish nationalist Piotr Rybak said his group was protesting the official observances at Auschwitz, claiming they remember only murdered Jews and not murdered Poles.

That accusation is incorrect. The observances at the state-run memorial site pay homage each Jan. 27 to all of the camp's victims, both Jews and gentiles.

Counterprotesters at Auschwitz on Sunday held up a "Fascism Stop" sign and an Israeli flag, while police kept the two groups apart.

Former Auschwitz prisoners placed flowers Sunday at an execution wall at Auschwitz. They wore striped scarves that recalled their uniforms, some with the red letter "P," the symbol the Germans used to mark them as Poles.

Early in World War II, most prisoners were Poles, rounded up by the occupying German forces. Later, Auschwitz was transformed into a mass killing site for Jews, Roma and others, operating until the liberation by Soviet forces on Jan. 27, 1945.

In Germany, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas warned in an op-ed in the weekly Welt am Sonntag that across Europe populists are propagating nationalism and "far-



A young man stands in front of the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin on Sunday after laying down a red rose.

MARRUS SCHREIBER/AP

HOLOCAUST HOMAGE

right provocateurs are trying to downplay the Holocaust."

"We shall never forget. We shall never be indifferent. We must stand up for our liberal democracy," Maas wrote.

Over the past year, Germany has seen a rising number of often violent attacks against Jews carried out by neo-Nazis and Muslims, prompting the government to appoint a commissioner against anti-Semitism and to start funding a national registration office for anti-Semitic hate crimes.

The clashes of views at Auschwitz come amid a surge of right-wing extremism in Poland and elsewhere in the West. It is fed by a broader grievance many Poles have that their suffering during the war at German hands is little known abroad while there is greater knowledge of the Jewish tragedy.

However, recent surveys show that knowledge of the atrocities during World War II is declining generally.

A new study released in recent days by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the Azrieli Foundation found that 52 percent of millennials in Canada cannot name even one concentration camp or ghetto, and 62 percent of millennials did not know that 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

Its findings were similar to another study carried out a year before in the United States.

In Britain, a new poll by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust found that one in 20 adults in Britain do not believe the Holocaust took place.

The poll of more than 2,000 people released Sunday also found that nearly two-thirds of those polled either did not know how many Jews had been murdered or greatly underestimated the number killed during the Holocaust.



Mikhail Klimentyev, Sputnik, Kremlin pool/AP

Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, takes part in a wreath-laying ceremony Sunday at Piskaryovskoye Cemetery in St. Petersburg, Russia, where most of the Leningrad Siege victims were buried during World War II.

Russia marks 75th anniversary of end of WWII siege by Nazis

By IRINA TITOVA
Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — The Russian city of St. Petersburg marked the 75th anniversary of the end of the World War II siege by Nazi forces with a large military parade Sunday in the city's sprawling Palace Square.

Russian President Vladimir Putin later laid flowers at a monument in Piskaryovskoye Cemetery, where hundreds of thousands of siege victims are buried.

The siege of the city, then called Leningrad, lasted nearly 2½ years until the Soviet Army drove the Nazis away on Jan. 27, 1944.

Estimates of the death toll vary, but historians agree that more than 1 million Leningrad residents died from hunger or air and artillery bombardments during the siege.

On Sunday, more than 2,500 soldiers and 80 units of military equipment paraded as snow fell and temperatures hovered around 0 degrees Fahrenheit. The vehicles included a T-34 tank. Such tanks played a key role in defeating the Nazis and became a widely revered symbol of the nation's wartime valor and suffering.

During the siege, most Leningrad residents had to survive on rations of just 125 grams of bread a day and whatever other food they could buy or exchange at local markets after selling their belongings.

Among those who succumbed to the deprivations of the siege was Putin's 1-year-old brother. Putin himself was born after the siege, in 1952.

The Russian president did not attend the parade, which some civic groups had objected to as inappropriate, saying the day should commemorate the victims rather than flaunt military strength.

The Kremlin also announced Sunday that Putin had signed an order allocating 150 million rubles, or \$2.3 million, for creating new exhibits at the state museum of the siege.

"Today, we mourn those who died defending Leningrad, who at the cost of their lives broke through the blockade. We recall those who worked in the besieged city, who, risking themselves, delivered bread and medicine along the Road of Life," Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev wrote on social media.

Medvedev was referring to the ice road across Lake Ladoga that was the only conduit for supplies and evacuations during much of the siege.



CZAREK SOKOLOWSKI/AP

Former prisoners place candles and flowers at the Death Wall marking the 74th anniversary of the liberation of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oswiecim, Poland.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Grizzly bites employee's finger at Denver Zoo

CO DENVER — An employee at the Denver Zoo was treated at a hospital after a grizzly bear bit his finger.

Zoo spokesman Jake Kubie told The Denver Post the "bear keeper" was bitten Friday afternoon while the grizzly was in a secure and enclosed area.

The zoo has two rescued grizzly bears, Tundra and Kootenai. Kubie could not say which bear bit the keeper.

Tree falls on mother during trip to LA Zoo

CA LOS ANGELES — A woman is recovering from a broken rib after she was struck and trapped by a falling tree during her family's trip to the Los Angeles Zoo.

It happened Tuesday at a time when gusty winds were knocking down trees throughout the Los Angeles area.

Maria Martinez, of Huntington Park, told KNBC-TV she took her three kids to the zoo because she had a day off and there was a teachers' strike. The falling pine tree briefly knocked her unconscious.

Her 11-year-old son and two other people were treated for less serious injuries.

Cruise ship freed from beneath rail bridge

NY TROY — An unoccupied Hudson River cruise ship that broke loose from its moorings amid rising water and ice jams has been freed from beneath a rail bridge in Albany.

The four-deck Captain J.P. III cruise ship and six other vessels drifted downriver from Troy toward Albany early Friday, temporarily closing five vehicle bridges during morning rush hour.

The 300-foot cruise vessel was stuck for hours beneath a railroad bridge connecting Albany and Rensselaer, prompting Albany to reduce speeds over the span. Two Coast Guard ice-breaking cutters and two commercial tug boats worked to pull it free.

The Coast Guard said the ship was freed around 3:30 p.m. and towed back north to Troy.

Teen shares peanut butter with workers

VA WOODBRIDGE — A Virginia teen with autism shared his supply of peanut butter with federal workers who are furloughed like his father.

The Washington Post reported that Eric McKay, 15, and his family gave away several peanut butter jars Wednesday.

Food sensitivity isn't uncommon for people with autism. Eric's preferences include peanut butter and English muffins. His mother, Tracy McKay, said he goes through a jar every three days.

Lidl bestowed a lifetime supply of their store-branded peanut butter on the teen when he met the company's challenge to get 72,000 retweets.

THE CENSUS

8 The number of hours a Willimantic, Conn., man was stuck in a tree after he climbed it to escape rising floodwaters. Fire Chief Marc Scrivener said the homeless man had gone to check on his campsite near a river when he became trapped by rapidly rising water caused by heavy rain and melting snow. He was rescued about 5:30 a.m. Friday after being stuck eight feet up in the tree since about 9:30 p.m. Thursday. The unidentified man yelled for help until someone called 911. He was taken to a hospital with possible hypothermia.



Stars and Stripes photo illustration



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

Winter traction

Caleb Seely rides a unicycle on a snow-covered sidewalk as he heads home after helping shovel out his brother's driveway during a winter storm last week in Portland, Maine. The extra knobby tire on Seely's ride provided traction on a day when snow, sleet and freezing rain kept most motorists indoors.

Inauguration cannon fire causes uproar

ID BOISE — Idaho National Guard's commanding officer said he will look into 19 startlingly loud ceremonial cannon blasts that were part of Gov. Brad Little's inauguration.

The cannon fire on Jan. 4 set off car alarms in downtown Boise and scattered Canada geese into the air as smoke billowed around soldiers. Some of the several thousand people attending flinched in surprise.

Magician charged with assaulting students

MA WEYMOUTH — Massachusetts State Police arrested a magician they said inappropriately touched three students during magic classes.

The Plymouth district attorney's office said David Hussey, 52, was arrested at his Weymouth home Wednesday and charged with indecent assault and battery. Hussey, who uses the stage name

David Oliver, pleaded not guilty.

Prosecutors allege Hussey assaulted the young victims during magic classes at his Rockland home in the early 2000s while he was a member of the Society of Young Magicians.

Steer sets record at stock show auction

CO DENVER — Officials said a prize-winning steer was auctioned for a record-setting amount at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

Ames Construction Co. made a winning bid of \$150,000 for the Grand Champion Steer at Friday night's auction of junior competitors' livestock. Kutter Bland, 17, from Slant, Texas, showed the 1,339-pound steer, named Bob.

The auction sales of eight champion animals totaled \$480,000.

Police: Woman drove drunk on vanilla extract

CT NEW CANAAN — Police said a woman charged with driving under the

influence was drunk on vanilla extract, which contains a significant amount of alcohol.

Hearst Connecticut Media reported that New Canaan police found Stefanie Warner-Grise, 50, sitting in a car at an intersection with her eyes closed about 4:45 p.m. Wednesday.

Officers said they found several bottles of pure vanilla extract inside her vehicle. They said they detected an odor of vanilla on her breath, her speech was slurred and she was unable to answer basic questions.

Clabber Girl sign back in place after paint job

IN TERRE HAUTE — A Clabber Girl baking powder billboard that's been a western Indiana landmark since the 1930s is shining again following a restoration.

Crews installed the 80-year-old billboard's freshly painted yellow and red panels Jan. 21 along U.S. 40 on Terre Haute's east side.

The billboard still lacks trim work and its electric clock, but

they'll be reinstalled soon following their own restoration work.

The Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Terre Haute-based Clabber Girl Co. are collaborating on the restoration of the sign.

Bill introduced to ban dwarf-tossing

WA OLYMPIA — Bars and strip clubs in Washington state would be barred from holding dwarf-tossing contests under a bill introduced by a Spokane Valley legislator.

The Spokesman-Review reported the Deja Vu Showgirls strip club in the Spokane Valley and a Seattle club sponsored such events last year.

Republican Sen. Mike Padden brought the bill after he was contacted by a medical student who has dwarfism about the potential harm the contests can cause.

Under the bill, a bar or strip club that allows such a contest could lose its business license and face a \$1,000 fine.

From wire reports

FACES

Matthew
McConaughey
and Anne
Hathaway
star in
"Serenity."

AVIRON
PICTURES/AP

different kind of DANGEROUS WOMAN

Hathaway plays a femme fatale we actually care about in thriller 'Serenity'

BY CHRIS HEWITT
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Other than being diametrically opposed to the opinion of the guy who wrote her character, you could say Anne Hathaway's first day of work on the thriller "Serenity" went great.

When she greeted writer/director Steven Knight, "the first thing he said to me was, 'She doesn't love Baker Dill.' I couldn't believe the first thing I had to do was disagree with him about somebody he had created, but I believe that she does love him," said Hathaway. "And we found that was the most interesting question: Does she or doesn't she?"

"She" is Karen, whose long blond hair, seductive drawl and interest in having her husband murdered seem to position her as a classic femme fatale. Dill (Matthew McConaughey) is her former lover, a war veteran who works as a fishing guide on an island where Karen arrives with her rich, abusive spouse (Jason Clarke). Like "Double Indemnity" and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" before it, "Serenity" hinges on the motives of the woman, who may or may not love the chump she hopes will bump off her husband.

"It's so hard to talk about the movie because you and I know the ending, and the twists and turns, but I guess what I would say is that I'm not sure we can ever really know each other," said Hathaway, who was drawn to the role of a woman with little control of her own life.

"Playing Karen made me appreciate that being able to love someone safely is a lot easier to do from a position of privilege, and she doesn't have that privilege. I think a lot of women are not encouraged to stand on their own two feet when they're young. It's not considered necessary if they can find someone great to spend their life with. But if that is taken away from you, you become vulnerable."

In addition to the role, she was attracted to the chance of teaming with McConaughey and with that guy she disagreed with. Knight is the creator of the TV series "Peaky Blinders" and the writer of movies "Allied," "Dirty Pretty Things" and "Eastern Promises," all of which feature the kind of glittering dialogue that actors love to tackle.

"I'm a huge fan of Steven, and I wanted to work with Matthew again as soon as we finished (the 2014 Christopher Nolan film) 'Interstellar.' But I also loved that this is a film about a soldier," she said. "We must

respect the heroism of soldiers. We really must. But wars come at such great cost to not just the soldiers but also their families."

Hathaway prepared for the part by speaking with military families and victims of abuse.

When it's suggested to her that Karen plays like a feminist take on the '40s femme fatale — only, unlike those original film noirs, this movie is interested in why the mystery woman behaves the way she does — Hathaway sparks to the notion.

"Someone described Karen to me as a dangerous woman, this very 'femme fatale' kind of description. I think it's interesting that, even without knowing anything about her, people draw those judgments about her because one thing the movie asks is: Where does that desperation come from?" said the Oscar winner for "Les Misérables."

Even the abuse Karen withstands fits the idea of a femme fatale who deserves our empathy, given that a lot of those classic film noir dames ended up with black eyes, which is to say they were victims of abuse long before we had the terminology for it.

"Right? And that was cool back then. It was unquestioned. And the observation about this being my take on a femme fatale: One thing about being an actress at this particular moment, and I use the word 'actress' deliberately, is I get this opportunity to subvert those sorts of stereotypes, to say there's more to this person," she said.

She was referring to a moment Karen gets — one most femme fatales never did — when, as Hathaway phrased it, "The mask drops and you see all the rage and the wrath that comes out."

Which is one thing actor and director agreed on about Hathaway's "Serenity" character: There is a lot more to her than meets the eye.

Singer to keep directing gig

Associated Press

Following an exposé that claimed Bryan Singer has seduced and molested several underage men, the film production company Millennium Films on Jan. 24 said it is staunchly supporting the director.

In a statement, Avi Lerner, founder and chief executive of Millennium, said that the company is going forward with a remake of the fantasy adventure "Red Sonja" with Singer attached to direct.

"The over \$800 million 'Bohemian Rhapsody' has grossed, making it the highest grossing drama in film history, is testament to his remarkable vision and acumen," said Lerner. "I know the difference between agenda-driven fake news and reality, and I am very comfortable with this decision. In America people are innocent until proven guilty."

An article published Jan. 23 in The Atlantic alleged a pattern of predatory behavior by Singer, including sex with a 15-year-old at a Beverly Hills, Calif., mansion in 1997. Three men spoke on the condition of anonymity and a fourth said he was molested by Singer on the set of 1998's "Apt Pupil" when he was in the seventh grade.

Singer has denied the claims. Founded in 1996, Millennium Films has produced a number of star-driven action films including "The Expendables," "Olympus Has Fallen" and "The Hitman's Bodyguard."

GLAAD removed "Bohemian Rhapsody" from consideration for its 30th Media Awards over the Singer allegations. GLAAD said in a statement Jan. 24 that The Atlantic article "brought to light a reality that cannot be ignored or even tacitly rewarded."

GLAAD also announced that it will be honoring video games for the first time during its 30th annual GLAAD Media Awards this spring.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer advocacy group says it added the videogame category, partly to "leverage the gaming community to grow LGBTQ acceptance."

Study says more female filmmakers at Sundance

A new study finds that female filmmakers are submitting to and being accepted into the Sundance Film Festival in significantly greater numbers than they were a decade ago. But the study released Jan. 25 also says the numbers are still well below 50 percent.

The study by the Sundance Institute and University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative looked at more than 26,000 submissions and acceptances for the 2017 and 2018 festivals.

It found that 28 percent of feature-length and episodic projects submitted were directed by at least one woman, and around 35 percent of those were ultimately accepted.

"I ... loved that this is a film about a soldier. We must respect the heroism of soldiers. We really must. But wars come at such great cost to not just the soldiers but also their families."

Anne Hathaway

EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Documents: Facebook profited from ‘friendly fraud’

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Facebook allowed children to rack up huge bills on digital games while the company rejected recommendations for addressing what it dubbed “friendly fraud,” according to newly released court documents.

The internal Facebook memos and other records were unsealed late Thursday to comply with a judge's order in a federal court case settled in 2016.

The lawsuit, filed in San Jose, Calif., centered on allegations that Facebook knowingly milked teenagers by permitting them to spend hundreds of dollars buying additional features on games such as "Angry Birds" and "Barn Buddy" without their parents' consent.

The documents show Facebook considered measures to reduce the chances of kids running up charges on parents' credit cards without their knowledge.

But the company didn't adopt them for fear of undercutting the revenue growth that helps boost the company's stock price — and its employees' compensation.

The internal debate about how to address the recurring problem of kids spending big bucks behind their parents' backs occurred from 2010 and 2014 — a period that included Facebook's stock market debut in 2012. After going public at \$38 per share, Facebook's stock plummeted by 50 percent, intensifying the pressure on CEO Mark Zuckerberg and his management team to bring in more revenue.

None of the unsealed records, however, directly tie Facebook's tolerance of "friendly fraud" to concerns about its slumping stock price during parts of 2012 and 2013.



RICHARD DREW/AL

Court documents unsealed last week show that Facebook did not follow through on recommendations to address “friendly fraud” in which children were allowed to rack up big bills on video games.

A Facebook statement didn't address its rejection of the recommendations. Instead, it said the company has offered refunds and changed its practices.

"We routinely examine our own practices, and in 2016 agreed to update our terms and provide dedicated resources for refund requests related to purchases made by minors on Facebook," the Menlo Park, Calif., company said in a statement Friday.

Facebook isn't the only prominent technology company that has been skewered for profiting from game-loving children who don't always understand how much of their parents' money they are spending while playing games in apps or websites.

Apple agreed to issue \$32.5 million in refunds for allowing kids to make in-app purchases without parental consent as part of a 2014 settlement with the Federal Trade Commission.

That same year, Google settled a similar case for \$19 million with the same agency. In 2017, Amazon resolved another case involving up to \$70 million in potential refunds owed for kids' unauthorized spending on games.

But none of those companies had their dirty laundry aired quite like Facebook is now in a case that it thought it had closed a few years ago.

The unflattering documents are emerging after the nonprofit Center for Investigative Report-

ing sought their release and U.S. District Judge Beth Freeman granted it.

Facebook released the “friendly fraud” documents just as the Wall Street Journal was publishing an op-ed piece by Zuckerberg defending the company’s integrity and business principles.

But some of the information unsealed in the court case painted a picture of a predatory company.

In a 2013 discussion between two of the company's employees, a 15-year-old Facebook user who had spent about \$6,500 playing games is described as a "whale"—a term that gambling casinos use to describe people who make them a lot of money.

The company decided to refuse

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Jan. 28)	\$1.1659
Dollar buys (Jan. 28)	€0.8577
British pound (Jan. 28)	\$1.34
Japanese yen (Jan. 28)	107.00
South Korean won (Jan. 28)	1,099.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3128
Canada (Dollar)	1.3756
China (Yuan)	6.7596
Denmark (Krone)	6.5610
Egypt (Pound)	17.8896
France (Franc)	\$1.3797/0.8788
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8462
Hungary (Forint)	279.41
Israel (Shekel)	3.6740
Japan (Yen)	109.64
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3033
Norway (Krone)	8.2826
Philippines (Peso)	52.54
Poland (Zloty)	3.77
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7507
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3448
South Korea (Won)	1.11847
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9947
Thailand (Baht)	31.56
Turkey (Lira)	5.2823

(Military) exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the countries of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies: to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.00
Federal funds market rate	2.40
3-month bill	2.39
30-year bond	3.03

WEATHER OUTLOOK

MONDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



MONDAY IN EUROPE

**TUESDAY IN THE PACIFIC**

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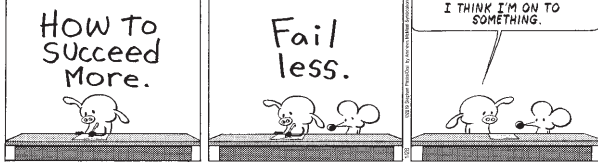
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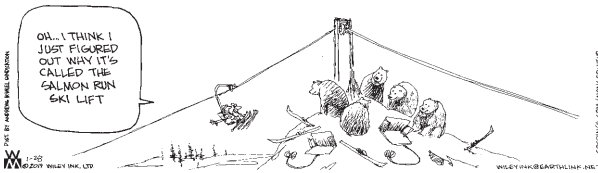
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



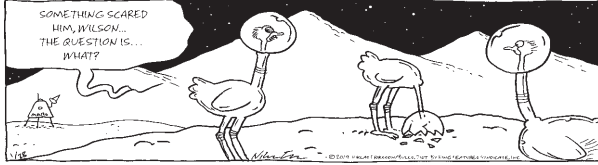
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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55								56		57		

ACROSS

- 1 Egyptian deity
- 5 Piercing tool
- 8 Probability
- 12 Lion's share
- 13 Hot tub
- 14 Stench
- 15 Unoriginal one
- 16 Home to the Buccaneers
- 18 Pizza topping
- 20 Wine container
- 21 Off-white
- 23 Dict. info
- 24 Spoofs
- 28 Pharmaceutical
- 31 Playwright Levin
- 32 Leg bone
- 34 Mentalist's gift
- 35 Rhett's last word
- 37 Mildew cause
- 39 Scratch
- 41 Valentine flower
- 42 Molds
- 45 Foliage
- 49 Marshmallow toaster
- 51 Carousel, for one
- 52 "I cannot tell —"
- 53 Pair
- 54 Aspiring atty.'s exam
- 55 Fork setting

DOWN

- 2 Still, in verse
- 6 Orange veggies
- 7 constellation
- 8 Abba-inspired hit musical
- 9 Apple computer
- 10 Buck
- 11 Former frosh
- 12 "Got it"
- 13 Meryl of film
- 14 Space rock
- 15 New Deal agcy.
- 16 Gentle soul
- 17 Gave a speech
- 18 Owing nothing
- 19 Transaction
- 20 Terrier type
- 21 Villain
- 22 Group of seals
- 23 Highlander
- 24 Release a
- 25 Almost
- 26 Ump
- 27 "Lion King"
- 28 Sainly ring
- 29 Faction
- 30 Faction
- 31 Faction
- 32 Faction
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- 35 Faction
- 36 Faction
- 37 Faction
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- 54 Faction
- 55 Faction

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	L	A	N	G	S	K	I	B	U	M
L	E	S	S	E	E	E	N	C	A	S
S	L	A	T	E	S	G	O	U	R	D
D	A	T	E	T	H	A	W	G	A	S
A	A	H	A	R	I	A	M	I	S	T
P	L	A	N	T	E	R	S	P	U	N
E	L	I	E	S	E	T	H	S	H	E
U	S	C	A	S	S	N	O	T	S	
L	O	U	V	R	E	I	N	J	U	R
E	N	T	I	C	E	S	C	O	R	E
E	S	S	A	I	S	H	O	U	S	E

1-28

CRYPTOQUIP

JXNXBQW AQEEXHZ PVB GBDW

ZBKVXZU MQK PXNYDG

KVXZUW HABQZG KVD NTBNY:

KVD MAQKD BE HTT DJXT.
Saturday's Cryptquip: THE NICKNAMES THE GUY'S GAVE THEMSELVES ARE OK, BUT THEY COULD HAVE BEEN HANDLED BETTER.
 Today's Cryptquip Clue: J equals V


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Sunday, March 25, 1945

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NHL

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Tampa Bay	49	27	10	2	76	199	140		
Toronto	49	30	17	2	62	174	141		
Washington	51	38	18	4	61	154	149		
Boston	49	27	17	5	59	143	128		
Buffalo	48	24	18	6	54	140	144		
Florida	48	20	28	8	48	152	170		
Detroit	51	19	25	7	45	145	172		
Ottawa	50	19	26	7	43	156	187		

Metropolitan Division

	Central Division						
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Winnipeg	48	31	15	2	64	167	134
Nashville	52	30	18	4	64	161	135
Minnesota	50	26	21	3	55	142	142
Dallas	49	24	21	4	52	126	128
Colorado	50	22	20	8	52	169	162
St. Louis	49	22	22	5	49	139	149
Chicago	51	18	24	9	45	156	190

Western Conference

Central Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Winnipeg	48	31	15	2	64	167	134		
Nashville	52	30	18	4	64	161	135		
Minnesota	50	35	21	3	55	142	142		
Dallas	49	24	21	4	52	126	128		
Colorado	49	21	25	7	52	169	162		
St. Louis	49	22	22	5	49	139	149		
Chicago	51	18	24	9	45	156	190		

Pacific Division

San Jose 7, Washington 6, OT
Arizona 3, Ottawa 2
Chicago 3, N.Y. Islanders 2, SO
Detroit 3, Edmonton 2
Calgary 3, Carolina 2, OT

Wednesday's games

Montreal 2, Arizona 1
Toronto 6, Washington 3
Minnesota 5, Colorado 2
Nashville 2, Vegas 1
St. Louis 5, Anaheim 1

Notes: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss, top three teams in each division and two wild card per conference advance to playoffs.

Tuesday's games

San Jose 3, Washington 6, OT
Chicago 3, Ottawa 2
Arizona 3, N.Y. Islanders 2, SO
Detroit 3, Edmonton 2
Calgary 3, Carolina 2, OT

Wednesday's games

Montreal 2, Arizona 1
Toronto 6, Washington 3
Minnesota 5, Colorado 2
Nashville 2, Vegas 1
St. Louis 5, Anaheim 1
Carolina 5, Vancouver 2

Thursday's games

No games scheduled

Friday's games

No games scheduled

Saturday's games

Central All-Stars vs. Pacific All-Stars:
Central 10, Pacific 4
Metropolitan All-Stars vs. Atlantic All-Stars:
Metropolitan 7, Atlantic 4
All-Star Game Final: Metropolitan 10, Central 5

Sunday's games

No games scheduled

Monday's games

New Jersey at Pittsburgh
Winnipeg at Philadelphia
Tuesday's games

Buffalo at Columbus
Philadelphia at N.Y. Rangers

Calendar

Feb. 23 — Stadium Series, Pittsburgh at Philadelphia, Lincoln Financial Field.
April 6 — Last day of regular season.



Metropolitan Division goalie Braden Holtby of the Washington Capitals deflects a shot Saturday by the Atlantic Division during the second half of an All-Star Game semifinal in San Jose, Calif.

Saturday

Metropolitan 10, Central 5

Metropolitan 5 5-0-5
Central 0 0-5-5

First Period—1, Metropolitan, Crosby 1 (Letang, Crosby), 10:22, 2, Metropolitan, Giroux 1 (Carsson), 11:53, 3, Metropolitan, Letang 2 (Barzal, Crosby), 13:40, 4, Metropolitan, Palmieri 1 (Aho, Jones), 18:15, 5, Metropolitan, Crosby 3 (Barzal), 19:55.

Second Period—6, Central, Landeskog 4 (O'Reilly), 11:15, 7, Central, Rantanen 3 (Josi), 13:25, 8, Metropolitan, Crosby 2 (Letang), 15:07, 9, Metropolitan, Letang 1 (Kane, Josi), 14:38, 10, Metropolitan, Aho 2 (Atkinson), 15:38, 11, Metropolitan, Barzal 2 (Crosby, Letang), 17:16, 13, Central, Rantanen 4 (O'Reilly, Landeskog), 18:30, 14, Central, Wheeler 1 (Rantanen, Landeskog), 18:50, 15, Metropolitan, Atkinson 3 (Jones), 19:08.

Shots on Goal—Metropolitan 11-11-22, Central 6-17-23.

Power-play opportunities—Metropolitan 0 of 0, Central 0 of 0.

Goals—Metropolitan, Lundqvist (6 shots=6 saves), Holtby (7-12), Central, Rinne (10-6), Dubnyk (11-6).

A=17:562 (17,562), T=0:39.

Metropolitan 7, Atlantic 4

Metropolitan 3 4-7-4
Atlantic 0 2-4-4

First Period—1, Metropolitan, Crosby 1 (Barzal), 10:15, 2, Metropolitan, Jones 1 (Atkinson, Palmieri), 11:56, 3, Atlantic, Elchel 1 (Pasternak), 12:04, 4, Atlantic, Stamkos 1 (Tavares), 13:13, 5, Metropolitan, Jones 2, 19:40.

Second Period—6, Atlantic, Skinner 1 (Pasternak), 10:56, 7, Atlantic, Tavares 1 (Vandell), 11:28, 8, Metropolitan, Crosby 2 (Letang), 13:17, 9, Metropolitan, Letang 1, 16:22, 10, Metropolitan, Aho 1 (Giroux), 18:08, 11, Metropolitan, Atkinson 1 (Crosby), 19:14.

Shots on Goal—Metropolitan 13-13-26, Atlantic 7-13-20.

Power-play opportunities—Metropolitan 0 of 0, Atlantic 0 of 0.

Goals—Metropolitan, Lundqvist (7 shots=6 saves), Holtby (13-11), Atlantic, Vasilievsky (13-10), Howard (13-9).

A=17:562 (17,562), T=0:35.

Central 10, Pacific 4

Central 7 3-10-7
Pacific 0 3-4-4

First Period—1, Central, Rantanen 1 (O'Reilly), 11:02, 2, Central, Landeskog 1 (O'Reilly), 11:33, 3, Pacific, Karlsson 1 (Gibson), 14:51, 4, Central, Josi 1 (Kane), 15:08, 5, Central, Kane 1 (Wheeler, Josi), 15:31, 6, Central, Scheifele 1 (O'Reilly), 16:39, 7, Central, Rantanen 2 (Josi, Landeskog), 17:50, 8, Central, Kane 2 (Wheeler), 18:11.

Second Period—9, Central, Landeskog 2 (Rantanen, Josi), 10:42, 10, Central, O'Reilly 1, 12:30, 11, Central, Landeskog 3 (Wheeler), 14:36, 12, Pacific, Gaudreau 1 (McDavid), 14:47, 13, Pacific, Karlsson 2 (Pavelski, Burns), 15:52, 14, Pacific, Burns 1 (Pavelski), 16:02.

Shots on Goal—Central 9-9-18, Pacific 9-22-31.

Power-play opportunities—Central 0 of 0, Pacific 0 of 0.

Goals—Central, Rinne (9 shots=8 saves), Dubnyk (22-19), Pacific, Fleury (9-6), Gibson (2).

A=17:562 (17,562), T=0:40.



TONY AVELAR/AP

Metropolitan Division player Cam Atkinson of the Columbus Blue Jackets scores against Central Division goaltender Pekka Rinne of the Nashville Predators during the second half of the NHL hockey All-Star Game final in San Jose, Calif., Saturday. The Metropolitan Division won 10-5.

Crosby, Lundqvist lead team to All-Star victory

By JOSH DUBOW

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Sidney Crosby now has more reason to have good memories of the Shark Tank.

Crosby had two goals and three assists to win the All-Star MVP, and Henrik Lundqvist pitched a first-half shutout to lead the Metropolitan Division to a 10-5 victory over the Central Division in the championship round of the NHL All-Star game Saturday night.

Crosby finished the night with four goals and four assists in two games on the same ice where he won the Conn Smythe Trophy and Stanley Cup three years ago from Pittsburgh.

"I have some great memories here for sure," he said. "It's always been a tough place to play. Obviously, when you win in a rink and have those memories, it's something you think about every time you go there. Being in that dressing room, it's automatic to bring you back to some of those moments."

The memories aren't nearly as sweet for the Sharks fans, who booed Crosby when he won the award, joining Wayne Gretzky, Mario Lemieux, Bobby Orr, Joe Sakic and Jean Beliveau as the only players to win the Conn Smyth, the Hart Trophy and All-Star MVP.

"It's cool," Crosby said. "You play and you watch as a kid growing up and you see that presentation so it's pretty cool. I had a lot of fun today."

Lundqvist stopped 11 of 13 shots in his two games to give the Metropolitan Division its second title in four years of the three-on-three All-Star format and the \$1 million prize shared by the winners of the four-team divisional tournament.

Mathew Barzal of the New York Islanders added two goals and three assists in the final game.

Mikko Rantanen had two goals and Colorado teammate Gabriel Landeskog added one for the Central. Landeskog finished with four goals and three assists, while Rantanen had four goals and two assists.

"There's more pace obviously when it's the final and there's a million dollars on the line. A lot of guy

'I have some great memories here for sure. It's always been a tough place to play'

Sidney Crosby
All-Star Game MVP

were going a little bit harder but it's good for the fans," Rantanen said. "Just too bad that we were not that ready to play."

Crosby assisted on Barzal's goal against Devan Dubnyk just 22 seconds into the championship game and then made it 5-0 in the closing seconds of the first half off a pass from Barzal. Crosby also assisted on Pittsburgh teammate Kris Letang's goal in the first half and then helped seal the game with a

goal in the second half that made it 6-2.

Lundqvist made big saves against Landeskog and Claude Giroux in the period one night after winning the save streak competition in the skills challenge.

"It was good defense, good structure," Lundqvist said. "That helps, especially on three."

The first time the All-Star game came to San Jose in 1997, hometown favorite Owen Nolan capped the night by calling his shot and pointing to the spot where he completed a hat trick that delighted the Shark Tank.

Sharks fans didn't have as much to cheer for in the return, even though their three All-Stars started the night on the ice together for the Pacific. The Central blitzed the Pacific early for its first win in four years in this format, scoring seven goals on nine shots against John Gibson in the first half of the period in a 10-4 victory.

Landeskog had a hat trick and an assist and Roman Josi had three assists and a goal for the Central.

Pekka Rinne and Dubnyk combined to stop 23 of 27 shots with Dubnyk providing one of the biggest highlights with a glove save that robbed Connor McDavid on a breakaway.

The Metropolitan Division won the second semifinal 7-4 thanks to a tiebreaking goal by Letang with 3:38 to play. Sebastian Aho added an insurance goal seconds after Braden Holtby stopped John Tavares in close.

SUPER BOWL

Touches: All-Pro RB Gurley doesn't mind sharing carries

FROM BACK PAGE

provide in his unusually quiet NFC championship game.

Gurley is not a boastful person in most public settings, but he is confident in his ability to finish the season with a bang. He also insists he doesn't mind if C.J. Anderson or somebody else does his job, as long as the Rams are all getting rings.

"We're all going to have our downs, but you enjoy it even more when you do something great, or you have that success," Gurley said. "I know who I am. I'm comfortable with myself. I'm the best. I'm the best at my position. I've been that way all my whole life, so it's like I'm going to keep striving. I know what I can do."

Nobody saw it in New Orleans, where Gurley made almost no impact on the Rams' 26-23 overtime victory. The highest-paid running back in NFL history touched the ball only five times, albeit scoring a TD on one of those touches, rushing just four times and failing to catch two of the three passes intended for him.

He was mostly a spectator down the stretch while watching Anderson, the veteran running back acquired by Los Angeles to fill in while Gurley missed the final two games of the regular season with a knee injury.

Unlike some elite running backs, Gurley has repeatedly said he doesn't care how many touches he gets as long as the Rams are winning. He appears to have a harmonious vibe with Anderson, who predicts a bounce-back performance by Gurley in the Super Bowl.

He also still remembers the Rams' miserable 4-12 season in 2016, when his ability was widely questioned. Being one part of a winning team is infinitely more appealing than being a star on a loser.

"This whole game is bigger than me," Gurley said. "It's not

just about me. Why is Todd not getting the ball? Why is that? Because there's only one football and there's 11 guys."

Still, Gurley is a major reason why the Rams were in position to reach the Super Bowl in the first place, thanks to his latest outstanding regular season. He finished third in the league with 1,251 yards rushing and racked up an NFL-best 21 touchdowns, excelling as a runner and a receiver for the second straight year in Sean McVay's offense.

But Gurley's up-and-down form and usage since early December has been surprising and potentially troublesome for the Rams.

Although he was effective as a receiver, Gurley managed just 76 combined yards rushing in his final two regular-season games in early December before sitting out the Rams' last two games. He returned with a 115-yard rushing game against Dallas in the divisional playoff round, but Anderson put up 123 yards and then Gurley barely factored in the Rams' game plan in New Orleans.

McVay has attempted to take the blame for this series of quick performances by his franchise running back.

"Anytime that you have a player like Todd Gurley on your team, I've got to do a better job of getting him involved and getting him into the flow of the game," McVay said this week, lamenting Gurley's lack of touches against the Saints. "That's something that I have to be accountable for."

But if McVay goes to Anderson early and often again in Atlanta, Gurley insists he won't mind watching another Super Bowl.

"You live for moments like that," Gurley said. "But like I said, you give, you learn. I don't give a damn what I do (in the game), honestly. I just want to win, so I don't really care. You always want to do good, but you just want to win."



JEFF ROBERSON/AP

New England Patriots running back Sony Michel, center, runs against the Chiefs during the first half of the AFC Championship game in Kansas City, Mo.

Patriots controlling clock, third downs during playoffs

BY KYLE HIGHTOWER
Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Throughout the Patriots' run of playoff success under Bill Belichick, one of his best-known attributes has been his ability to craft game plans that have stumped their opponents.

He's at it again. This postseason New England's best offensive weapon has been finding ways to keep the ball out of the hands of its opponents.

In wins over the Kansas City Chiefs and Los Angeles Chargers, the Patriots used a commitment to the run game and efficiency on third down to dominate time of possession.

The Patriots held a nearly 17-minute advantage in their divisional-round win over the Chargers, while going 7 of 14 on third down and racking up 155 yards rushing. It was more of the same in the AFC championship game against the Chiefs, with New England possessing the ball more than 23 minutes longer than KC, going 13 of 19 on third down (68 percent) and rushing for 176 yards.

Rookie Sony Michel shined in both games, rushing for 129 yards and three touchdowns against Los Angeles and 113 yards and two scores against the Chiefs.

"You have got to try to keep them off balance and got to make them think it is one thing and try to do something else, it is even hard then," Belichick said of the approach against Kansas City. "You cannot sit there and do the same thing all night."

The result in both games was fewer possessions for Chargers quarterback Philip Rivers and

By the numbers

23 8m, 5s

Advantage in time of possession, in minutes, that the Patriots held over the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC Championship.

Time consumed by New England's 15-play, 80-yard opening drive in the AFC Championship game, which ended with a touchdown.

It was the Patriots' longest opening drive in the playoffs under head coach Bill Belichick.

SOURCE: Associated Press

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, forcing both to play hurry-up in the second half as they tried to erase early deficits.

The Patriots opened the game against the Chargers with a 14-play, 83-yard drive that ate up more than seven minutes and ended with a touchdown. New England would go on to score on each of its first four possessions to build a 35-7 halftime lead. It put Los Angeles in scramble mode for the rest of the game.

New England made Kansas City pay for deferring the opening kickoff in the AFC championship game, opening the game with a 15-play, 80-yard drive and touchdown. It took 8 minutes, 5 seconds off the clock, making it the Patriots' longest opening drive in the playoffs under Belichick.

Tom Brady said it was the perfect equalizer to the hostile environment of Arrowhead Stadium. "You play on the road, it is

going to be tough. What travels is running the ball and playing tough," he said. "That is good in any weather, any condition, any environment and any stadium."

The 37-31 overtime win over the Chiefs was just the third road victory for Brady in the conference title game in six tries. While the Super Bowl will be played on a neutral field, the Patriots are hoping to duplicate that formula against Jared Goff and the Rams. Los Angeles averaged 32.9 points per game during the regular season and held the ball an average of 30 minutes, 42 seconds per game.

Tight end Rob Gronkowski said the resurgence of the run game over the past two games has provided a spark to the offense.

"I feel like it's what's making us," he said. "You gotta be able to run the ball. It opens up the play action. It opens up the receivers. ... You gotta be able to grind it out."



KYUSUNG GONG/AP

Los Angeles running back Todd Gurley loved to attend the Super Bowl as a fan the past few years. Now that he finally gets to play in it with the Rams, the star running back doesn't even care if he's sharing carries with C.J. Anderson.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Top 25 roundup

Washington carries No. 8 Kentucky past No. 9 Kansas

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. — PJ Washington and No. 8 Kentucky hit the glass hard against No. 9 Kansas.

It worked. Washington scored 14 of his 20 points in the second half, and the Wildcats beat the Jayhawks 71-63 on Saturday in the SEC-Big 12 Challenge.

Washington, Reid Travis and Keldon Johnson powered Kentucky to a 49-36 rebounding advantage. Washington grabbed 13 boards, Travis had 18 points and 12 rebounds, and Johnson also posted a double-double with 15 points and 10 rebounds.

"I just came out aggressive, and that just shows on the glass," Washington said after his fifth double-double this season. "I just tried to look for my shot, look for my teammates, just be aggressive."

Neither team reached 40 percent shooting, but the Wildcats (16-3) were much better in the second half and held the Jayhawks (16-4) in check down the stretch of the marquee matchup between college basketball's two winningest programs.

Illinois 78, No. 13 Maryland 67: Ayco Donnumu scored 20 points, Tevian Jones had 18 and Illinois beat Maryland at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Andres Felix had 15 points for the Fighting Illini (6-14, 2 Big Ten), who snapped a two-game skid by handing the Terrapins their second straight conference loss.

Bruno Fernando led Maryland (16-5, 7-3) with 19 points and 10 rebounds. Anthony Cowan Jr. had 18 points and Jalen Smith finished with 11.

The game was tied at 59 with 5:21 left before Illinois grabbed control with a 15-4 run. Donnumu made two foul shots to make it 74-63 with 35 seconds remaining.

No. 25 LSU 86, Missouri 80 (OT): Skylar Mays scored 11 of his 24 points in the last three minutes of regulation, and LSU overcame a 14-point deficit in the final 2:08 to force overtime in a win at Missouri.

Ja'Vonte Smart made two three-pointers in OT and scored 14 points for LSU (16-3, 6-0 Southeastern Conference). Naz Reid also had 14 points.

Jordan Geis had 25 points and 11 rebounds for Missouri (10-8, 1-5). Jeremiah Tilmon added 15 points, and Javon Pickett had 13.

No. 22 Mississippi State 92, No. 16 Auburn 84: Quindary Weatherspoon scored 27 points, leading host Mississippi State.

The Tigers and the Bulldogs (15-4, 3-3 Southeastern Confer-

ence) were locked in a tight game for much of the second half before Mississippi State broke a 70-70 tie with Weatherspoon's three-pointer and Reggie Perry's dunk in quick succession.

An irate Auburn coach Bruce Pearl then was called for a technical foul after arguing with officials and Weatherspoon hit two free throws to give the Bulldogs a 77-70 lead with 7:13 left.

The Tigers (13-6, 2-4) have lost three straight. Auburn shot 53 percent from the field and was led by Bryce Brown's 18 points, but were hurt by 19 turnovers.

No. 10 Virginia Tech 78, Syracuse 56: Justin Robinson scored 24 of his career-high 35 points in the first half, powering the host Hokies.

Virginia Tech (16-3, 5-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) used a 20-5 run to open a 34-16 lead. Robinson had 12 points in the surge as the Hokies led by as many as 22 on their way to a 43-24 halftime lead.

Oshae Brissett scored 16 points for the Orange (14-6, 5-2), and Frank Howard had 13.

No. 1 Tennessee 83, West Virginia 66: Lamonte Turner had 23 points and the host Volunteers held the Mountaineers scoreless for a 9½-minute stretch.

Tennessee (18-1) erased its first double-digit deficit of the season and took command by ending the first half on a 24-2 run and scoring the first four points of the second half. That put the Volunteers on track for their 14th consecutive victory in the school's longest win streak since it opened the 1922-23 season with 14 straight wins.

Grant Williams scored 19 points for Tennessee, and Admiral Schofield had 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Esa Ahmad scored 16 points and Derek Culver had 15 for West Virginia (9-11), which lost for the seventh time in its last eight games.

No. 2 Duke 66, Georgia Tech 53: RJ Barrett had 24 points and 11 rebounds, and the host Blue Devils pulled away for the victory.

Zion Williamson added 22 points to help Duke (17-2, 6-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) win its 12th in a row in the series with the Yellow Jackets.

The Blue Devils finished a season-worst 2-for-21 from three-point range but hit 52 percent from the field in the second half to win their lowest-scoring game of the year.

Abdoulaye Gueye had 14 points and Michael Devoe added 11 for Georgia Tech (11-9, 3-4), which has dropped four of six.



JAMES CRISP/AP

Kentucky's Reid Travis shoots while pressured by Kansas' Dedric Lawson during the No. 8 Wildcats' 71-63 defeat Saturday of the No. 9 Jayhawks in Lexington, Ky.

No. 3 Virginia 82, Notre Dame 55: DeAndre Hunter scored 19 points to lead the Cavaliers to the road win.

Virginia shot 52.2 from the field in its second straight victory since a 72-70 loss at Duke on Jan. 19. Kyle Guy, Indiana's 2016 Mr. Basketball at Lawrence Central near Indianapolis, had 15 points. Ty Jerome added 13 points, and Kihei Clark finished with 12.

The Cavs (18-1, 6-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) dominated the boards 45-33 and committed just two turnovers.

John Mooney had his ACC-leading 12th double-double of the season with 15 points and 10 rebounds for the struggling Fighting Irish (11-9, 1-6), who dropped their fourth in a row.

No. 21 North Carolina State 69, Clemson 67: Braxton Beverly hit a buzzer-beating three-pointer to lift the Wolfpack to a dramatic home win.

North Carolina State (16-4, 4-3 Atlantic Coast Conference) trailed by six with 26.5 seconds left, but the Tigers missed four straight free throws to keep the door ajar.

After Marquise Reed missed two free throws with 7.5 seconds left, the Wolfpack stroled right through it.

C.J. Bryce got the rebound and pushed up court with no timeouts, then turned back to find Beverly for a three on what had otherwise been a quiet day for the sophomore.

Reed scored 19 points for the Clemson (11-8, 1-5) but missed four straight free throws in the final 15 seconds.

No. 12 Marquette 87, Xavier 82: Markus Howard scored 19 of his 31 points down the stretch to help the Golden Eagles rally on the road for their seventh consecutive win.

Joey Hauser added 21 points for Marquette (18-3, 7-1 Big East). After the Musketeers (11-10, 3-5) pulled ahead 58-47 with 14

minutes left, Howard hit a pair of baskets that started the Golden Eagles' comeback. His long three-pointer put the his team ahead 79-71 with 1:59 left, and his two free throws with 9.1 seconds left closed it out.

Paul Scruggs scored 21 points for Xavier, and Tyrrique Jones matched his career high with 21 points and 11 rebounds.

No. 14 Texas Tech 67, Arkansas 64: Davide Moretti had 21 points, and the Red Raiders stopped a three-game slide.

Moretti's two free throws with five seconds left sealed the SEC/Big 12 Challenge game for the Texas Tech (16-4) after its double-digit lead was trimmed to two with a minute left. The Red Raiders didn't make another field goal after Norene Odia's dunk made it 60-48 with 7:41 left.

Daniel Gafford led the Razorbacks (11-8) with 14 points after missing most of the first half in foul trouble.

No. 24 Iowa State 87, No. 20 Mississippi 73: Talen Horton-Tucker scored 23 points and Lindell Wigginton had 18, leading the Cyclones to a road win in the SEC/Big 12 Challenge.

Iowa State (15-5) put on an offensive show, making 13 straight shots during the second half to turn a tight game into a relatively easy victory. The Cyclones shot 69.1 percent from the field, including nearly 77 percent in the second half.

Ole Miss (14-5) was led by Brezin Tyree, who finished with 22 points.

No. 23 Louisville 66, Pittsburgh 51: Jordan Nwora scored 17 points to help the host Cardinals avenge their only conference loss this season.

Louisville (15-5, 6-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) shot just 39 percent, but its strong defense shut down the Panthers (12-8, 2-5) in the second half.

Jared Wilson-Frame led Pittsburgh with 14 points.

Service academies

Joyce lifts Air Force to OT win

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Chris Joyce hit a three-pointer with five seconds left in the second overtime and Air Force pulled out a 73-71 win to keep San Jose State winless in Mountain West Conference action on Saturday night.

Not that the Spartans went easily. Brae Ivey scored at the basket with :20 left in the first overtime to tie the game at 65-65. His three with :04 left in regulation tied the game at 56-56.

Caleb Morris put the Falcons on top with a three to start the second overtime. Seneca Knight's layup with :26 left put the Spartans on top, 71-70, but he missed the free throw to make it a three-point play and Air Force controlled the rebound. Joyce took a feed from Sid Tormes and hit the game winner and Noah Baumann missed a three to win it for San Jose State with a second left.

Lavelle Scottie and A.J. Walker each scored 14 points to lead Air Force (9-11, 4-4) and Ryan Swan pulled down 17 rebounds.

Steedman finished with 24 points and Ivey added another 18 for San Jose State (3-16, 0-7).

Army 69, Lafayette 63: Lonnie Grayson came off the bench to score a season-high 19 points and spark Army to a win at Lafayette to complete a season sweep of the Leopards.

Grayson has become a spark off the bench and now has scored in double figures in four straight games, all wins by the Black Knights (11-10, 6-2 Patriot).

Lafayette hit three three-pointers in the first four minutes of the second half and extended its four-point halftime advantage into a 48-36 lead. Grayson ignited an Army comeback by scoring at the basket and hitting a three and the Black Knights tied the game at 52-52 with 9:50 left and surged to a 60-52 advantage on Grayson's layup with 4:32 left.

Alex Petrie paced Lafayette (5-14, 2-6) with 20 points and Justin Jaworski added another 15.

Holy Cross 69, Navy 64: Grandison and Austin Butler scored 22 points apiece and host Holy Cross knocked off Navy.

Grandison scored 19 points by halftime and matched his career high with six three-pointers as the Crusaders (12-9, 3-5 Patriot League) shot 63 percent from beyond the arc (12 of 19). Butler scored the last five points in a 10-0 run to open the second half as Holy Cross grabbed a 42-34 lead with 16:24 left to play and never trailed again.

George Kiernan hit a three-pointer to pull the Midshipmen (6-13, 3-5) within 65-61 with 46 seconds left, but Caleb Green sank four free throws from there to help Holy Cross hold on. Green scored 13 of his 15 points in the second half.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL/SPORTS BRIEFS



BUTCH DILL/AP

North quarterback Daniel Jones, of Duke, passed for a touchdown and ran for another to lead the North to a 34-24 win Saturday over the South in the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala.

Practice? Who needs it?

Duke QB earns MVP in Senior Bowl despite subpar week

BY JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

MOBILE, Ala. — Daniel Jones got his bad Senior Bowl moments out of the way long before kickoff.

The Duke quarterback threw a touchdown pass and ran for another score in the third quarter to lead the North to a 34-24 victory over the South Saturday, putting a nice finishing touch on the weeklong job interview with NFL teams.

"Just showing the poise and showing kind of a comfort in the offense is something they wanted to see," Jones said. "At times, I'm not sure I did great with that, to be honest. But here in the game, I think I did get comfortable and I got into a rhythm. Hopefully that showed them something and showed them I had the ability to do that and had the resiliency to do that."

Projected as a likely first-round pick, Jones turned in an efficient 8-for-11, 115-yard passing performance. Then, North Carolina State's Ryan Finley took over in the fourth quarter with similar results.

Jones, one of 11 junior graduates in the game, and Finley ignited a North team that trailed 12-3 at halftime only to score on its first five drives of the second half. He at least had the comfort of a familiar city since Jones is training in Mobile with David Morris at QB Country leading up to the combine.

North coach Jon Gruden of the Oakland Raiders liked how Jones rebounded from mistakes early in the week.

"He showed a lot of mental toughness," Gruden said. "He

'He threw two interceptions in 7-on-7 in practice, which is uncommon. But he came back the next day and the next day and the next day and showed the right stuff.'

Jon Gruden

North coach on Duke quarterback Daniel Jones

had some tough moments. He threw two interceptions in 7-on-7 in practice, which is uncommon. But he came back the next day and the next day and showed the right stuff."

Jones led the North on an 84-yard touchdown drive to start the second half. He finished it with a 1-yard touchdown run but completed mid-range passes to four different receivers, totaling 57 yards.

After Texas defensive end Charles Omenihu stripped the ball from Auburn quarterback Jarrett Stidham, Jones delivered a quick score to take a 17-12 lead. He completed a 25-yarder to Ohio State's Terry McLaurin on a flea flicker. Then UMass receiver Andy Isabella, a Biletnikoff Award finalist, scored on a 19-yard catch after breaking a tackle on his way to the end zone.

Finley then delivered a 23-yarder down the right sideline to Isabella on fourth and 2 on the way to another North touchdown. McLaurin ran 23 yards on an end around to set up a 4-yard touchdown run by Notre Dame's Dexter Williams.

Memphis's Tony Pollard, whose biggest claim to fame was as a kick returner, finished off the North scoring with a 21-yard

touchdown run. Pollard tied the NCAA record for most career kickoff return touchdowns with his seventh against Wake Forest at the Birmingham Bowl.

The quarterbacks weren't quite as heralded as last year's group that included Baker Mayfield (No. 1 overall) and Josh Allen (No. 7). But Missouri's Drew Lock and Jones are two of the top quarterback prospects in the draft, a group that includes underclassmen Dwayne Haskins of Ohio State and Oklahoma Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray.

Lock was solid in playing the first quarter for the North, going 9-for-14 for 57 yards. Finley was 9-for-11 for 83 yards.

"It was fun. I had a blast. It'd be different if you got pulled and you're sitting on the sideline watching your team win," Lock said. "It's how the dice fell."

Buffalo's Tyree Jackson delivered two touchdown passes in the fourth quarter for the South. The 6-foot-7, 245-pounder was 13-for-21 passing for 165 yards but was also intercepted by Delaware's Nasir Adderley, one of the top small college prospects in the game. Adderley is trying to follow in the steps of a famous relative, Pro Football Hall of Famer Herb Adderley.

Briefly

Police: Lions' Bates punched an officer

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Police say Trevor Bates of the Detroit Lions was arrested in New York for failing to pay a taxi fare and then punching a police officer in the face.

The 25-year-old linebacker was charged with assault, resisting arrest and theft of service after police were called around 3 a.m. Saturday at a hotel near New York's LaGuardia Airport.

The 6-foot-2, 240-pound player was taken to a hospital in Queens for evaluation.

Lions general manager Bob Quinn says in a statement that the team is aware of Bates' arrest but has no further comment for now.

Bates is in his first season with the Lions, appearing in nine games. The player was awaiting arraignment later Saturday. It was not immediately clear whether he had a lawyer.

In other league news: ■ The Chicago Bears signed right tackle Bobby Massie to a four-year contract extension through the 2022 season.

Massie has spent the past three years as Chicago's starting right tackle. He played with Arizona from 2012-15.

DeChambeau cruises to victory in Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — In his most dominant performance yet, Bryson DeChambeau turned a one-shot lead into a seven-stroke victory Sunday by closing with an 8-under 64 to set the tournament record and win the Dubai Desert Classic for the first European Tour victory and his fourth title in the last five months.

The 25-year-old American wasn't entirely happy with his game, even while building a one-shot lead over Li Haotong going into the final day at Emirates Golf Club. He had few complaints Sunday, however, opening with three straight birdies to expand his lead to four shots.

In other golf news:

■ Justin Rose overcame three penalty shots for a 3-under 69 and a three-shot lead Saturday in the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines in San Diego. It was the same margin with which he began the day.

Ferstl first German to twin Kitzbuehel super-G

KITZBUEHEL, Austria — Josef Ferstl has become the first German winner of the World Cup super-G at the classic Hahnenkamm event.

His win on Sunday came 40 years after his father, Sepp Ferstl, won back-to-back downhill at the same resort.

Starting first, Ferstl clocked 1 minute 13.07 seconds on the 2.1-kilometer Streifalm course, a

time that remained unmatched by all pre-race favorites.

Johan Clarey of France was 0.08 behind in second.

In other skiing news:

■ Austrian skier Stephanie Venier edged Olympic champion Sofia Goggia to win her first World Cup in a crash-interrupted downhill race that was ended early on Sunday.

The race was finished with 10 skiers still waiting to descend the Kandahar course after Italy's Federica Sioia became the seventh to crash after a jump. The 24-year-old was taken to a local hospital by helicopter.

Woman wows NHL fans in challenge

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Connor McDavid won the fastest skater competition again but Kendall Coyne Schofield won over the crowd.

The U.S. women's hockey star became the first woman to compete in the NHL All-Star skills competition on Friday night, racing around the rink in a time competitive with the top skaters in the men's game in a barrier-breaking moment for women's hockey.

Coyne Schofield was the first skater to take the ice and finished her lap in 14.346 seconds, impressing the NHL's biggest stars with her speed.

The 26-year-old Schofield plays for the Minnesota Whitecaps of the National Women's Hockey League and won an Olympic gold medal for the United States last February.

Thurman returns from injuries to beat Lopez

NEW YORK — Keith Thurman's elbow and hand looked fine, and his chin held up against a determined attack by Joseito Lopez. Thurman came back from a 22-month layoff to beat Lopez via majority decision Saturday night to retain his welterweight title.

Loch wins sixth men's luge world title

WINTERBERG, Germany — Felix Loch is the world men's luge champion for the record-tying sixth time, after the German great edged Reinhard Egger of Austria by one-tenth of a second on Sunday for this year's title.

Arsenal's Bellerin out for season with injury

LONDON — Arsenal assistant defender Hector Bellerin will be sidelined for the rest of the season after rupturing ligaments in his left knee.

NBA



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

Golden State guard Stephen Curry drives against the Celtics' Kyrie Irving during the second half of Saturday's game in Boston. The Warriors won 115-111.

Roundup

Warriors win 10th straight

Associated Press

BOSTON — Kevin Durant had 33 points and nine rebounds, Stephen Curry scored 24 points and Klay Thompson had 21, including two key free throws for Golden State on Saturday night to beat the Boston Celtics 115-111 and give the Warriors their 10th win in a row.

Kyrie Irving scored 32 points with 10 assists and Al Horford had 22 points and 13 rebounds for Boston, which had won five straight and 10 in a row at home.

In a game that featured 21 lead changes, the Warriors took a 113-111 lead with 47 seconds left on Thompson's first free throw of the game and held on as Boston had three chances to tie it or take the lead. Marcus Smart rimmed out on a three-pointer, Irving airballed a fadeaway from the baseline and Marcus Morris was short on a three.

"We needed this game," said Steve Kerr, who became the fastest coach in NBA history to 300 victories. "We needed to be challenged and we were challenged big-time and it could have gone either way."

Draymond Green missed two free throws, but he got his own rebound and then Curry made a pair of foul shots with 2.6 seconds left to ice it.

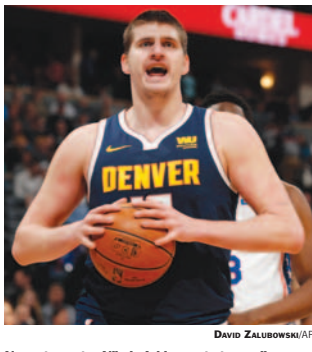
Spurs 126, Pelicans 114: LaMarcus Aldridge played through a sore left wrist and finished with 28 points and 12 rebounds, leading visiting San Antonio over depleted New Orleans.

Rudy Gay had 22 points, including 11 in the third quarter, and 11 rebounds to help San Antonio snap a two-game skid.

Grizzlies 106, Pacers 103: Mike Conley had 22 points and 11 assists, Jarrett Jackman Jr. added 20 points and host Memphis beat Indiana to end an eight-game losing streak.

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 21 points to lead the Pacers, who snapped a three-game winning streak in their first game since a season-ending injury to Victor Oladipo. Oladipo ruptured the quad tendon in his right knee in Wednesday night's win over Toronto, leaving the Pacers without their leading scorer.

Nuggets 126, 76ers 110: Nikola Jokic posted



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Nuggets center Nikola Jokic reacts to a call after scoring against the Philadelphia 76ers on Saturday in Denver. The Nuggets won 126-110.

his seventh triple-double of the season in his return from a one-game suspension and host Denver beat the short-handed Philadelphia. Jokic finished with 32 points, 18 rebounds and 10 assists.

The 76ers gave leading scorer Joel Embiid the night off, robbing fans of a Jokic-Embiid showdown but allowing their star to get a six-day midseason break before their next game Tuesday night against the Lakers in Los Angeles.

Trial Blazers 120, Hawks 111: CJ McCollum had 28 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his first career triple-double, leading the Portland past visiting Atlanta.

Sech Curry, who got the start for the Trail Blazers in place of a resting Damian Lillard, scored 22 points.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct
Toronto	36	15	70.6
Philadelphia	32	18	64.0
Boston	30	19	61.2
Brooklyn	27	23	54.0
New York	10	47	21.3

Southeast Division			
	W	L	Pct
Miami	23	24	48.9
Charlotte	23	25	47.9
Washington	21	27	43.8
Orlando	20	28	41.6
Atlanta	15	33	31.3

Central Division			
	W	L	Pct
Milwaukee	35	12	74.5
Indiana	32	16	66.7
Houston	21	27	43.8
Chicago	11	38	22.4
Cleveland	9	41	18.0

Western Conference

Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Houston	28	20	58.3
San Antonio	28	22	56.0
Dallas	22	26	45.8
New Orleans	20	28	41.7
Memphis	20	30	40.0

Northwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Denver	31	18	63.3
Oklahoma City	30	18	62.5
Portland	31	20	60.8
Utah	28	22	56.0
Minnesota	24	40	37.5

Pacific Division			
	W	L	Pct
Golden State	35	14	71.4
L.A. Clippers	27	12	69.2
L.A. Lakers	25	24	51.0
Sacramento	25	24	51.0
Phoenix	11	41	21.3

Friday's games			
Washington 95, Orlando 91			
Brooklyn 109, New York 99			
Miami 100, Cleveland 94			
Houston 121, Toronto 119			
L.A. Clippers 106, Chicago 101			
Sacramento 99, Memphis 96			
Utah 106, Minnesota 102			

Saturday's games			
San Antonio 126, New Orleans 114			
Memphis 106, Indiana 103			
Golden State 115, Boston 111			
Denver 126, Philadelphia 110			
Portland 120, Atlanta 111			

Sunday's games			
Cleveland at Chicago			
Sacramento at L.A. Clippers			
Milwaukee at Oklahoma City			
Orlando at Houston			
Toronto at Dallas			
Washington at San Antonio			
Miami at New York			
Phoenix at L.A. Lakers			

Monday's games			
Golden State at Indiana			
Utah 106, Minnesota 102			
New York at Charlotte			
Brooklyn at Boston			
Denver at Memphis			
Atlanta at L.A. Clippers			

Tuesday's games			
Memphis at Detroit			
Oklahoma City at Orlando			
Washington at Cleveland			
Chicago at Brooklyn			
New Orleans at Houston			
Phoenix at San Antonio			
Philadelphia at L.A. Lakers			

Saturday

Spurs 126, Pelicans 114

SAN ANTONIO — Gay 6-13 8-8 22, Aldridge 12-20 4-4 28, Payton 3-13 0-0 13, Davis 2-11 1-11, White 5-9 1-12, Cunningham 2-4 1-6, Poirier 4-7 1-2, Metu 0-1 0-0, Poeltl 0-0 3-4, Mills 2-5 0-6, Bellinelli 3-7 1-7, Frazier 0-0 0-0. **76ers** 110: Jokić 32-18-10, Harden 22-10-13, Simmons 18-11-7, Embiid 18-11-7, Fox 12-11-5, Green 12-11-5, Tatum 12-11-5, Brown 12-11-5, White 5-9 1-12, Cunningham 2-4 1-6, Poirier 4-7 1-2, Metu 0-1 0-0, Poeltl 0-0 3-4, Mills 2-5 0-6, Bellinelli 3-7 1-7, Frazier 0-0 0-0. **76ers** 110: Jokić 32-18-10, Harden 22-10-13, Simmons 18-11-7, Embiid 18-11-7, Fox 12-11-5, Green 12-11-5, Tatum 12-11-5, Brown 12-11-5, White 5-9 1-12, Cunningham 2-4 1-6, Poirier 4-7 1-2, Metu 0-1 0-0, Poeltl 0-0 3-4, Mills 2-5 0-6, Bellinelli 3-7 1-7, Frazier 0-0 0-0.

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Grizzlies 106, Pacers 103

INDIANA — Bogdanovic 6-14 8-9 21, Young 3-7 1-2 7, Turner 5-10 1-2 14, Collinson 3-5 1-0 18, Evans 2-4 0-0 9, McDermott 1-1 1-4, Leaf 1-2 0-0 2, Sabonis 3-7 2-8 11, O'Quinn 0-0 0-0, Joseph 3-4 1-0, A-Holiday 3-11 0-0 7. **Totals** 32-74 30-36 103.

MEMPHIS — J-Holiday 5-11 5-16, Jackson Jr. 4-4 4-5 20, Gasol 7-12 1-2 18, Conley 8-13 4-6 20, Gay 3-6 0-0 9, Cabacaba 3-5 2-2 11, Green 0-4 0-0 0, Rabb 1-1 0-0 0, Noah 4-7 1-2 8, Mack 3-7 2-3 8. **Totals** 39-80 18-28 106.

INDIANA — 19 23 37 34-103
Memphis — 24 29 25 28-106
Three-Point Goals—Indiana 9-27 (Turner 3, Collinson 2-2, Evans 1, McDermott 1-2, A-Holiday 1-0, Sabonis 1-6, Leaf 0-1, Joseph 0-2, Young 0-2), Memphis 9-28 (Cabacaba 3-4, Gasol 3-6, Conley 2-6, J-Holiday 4-4, Jackson Jr. 0-2, Mack 0-2, Green 0-2, Carter 0-2). **Fouled Out**—Bogdanovic, Young, Rebounds—Indiana 40 (Young, Sabonis 8), Memphis 38 (Gasol 7), Assists—Indiana 29 (Collinson 9, Memphis 29 (Conley 11), Total Fouls—Indiana 26, Memphis 24, Technicals—Green, Jackson Jr..

Trail Blazers 120, Hawks 111
ATLANTA — Huertel 1-8 1-2 3, J-Colins 8-12 3-4 21, Dedmon 4-8 2-2 11, Young 11-15 5-6 20, Bembry 1-5 0-0 9, Prince 5-10 0-11, Spellman 2-3 0-0 5, Len 3-7 2-9, Lin 6-6 2-2 10, Dorsey 1-2 0-3, Carter 2-5 0-2 6. **Totals** 42-92 15-20 111.

PORTLAND — Harkless 7-11 2-16, Arnu 7-7 7-7, Nurkic 4-10 1-8, Lunn 8-13 2-2 22, McCollum 10-23 6-7 28, Layman 2-2 2-2, Leonard 3-2 2-2 6, Collins 3-6 2-2 6, Stauskas 0-1 0-0 0, Turner 0-0 0-0 0, Baldwin IV 0-2 0-0 0. **Totals** 41-82 27-50 120.

Portland — 30 34 26 21-111
Portland — 40 23 29 27-126
Three-Point Goals—Atlanta 12-33 (Young 3-6, J-Colins 2-3, Carter 2-4, Len 1-1, Dorsey 1-1, Spellman 1-1, Dedmon 1-4, Prince 1-5, Bembry 0-1, Lin 0-2, Huertel 0-2). **Fouled Out**—None. **Rebounds**—Atlanta 36 (Prince, J-Colins 6), Portland 37 (McCollum 10, 0-0)—Atlanta 23 (Young 8), Portland 26 (McCollum 10). **Total Fouls**—Atlanta 27, Portland 23. A—19,629 (19,393).

Nuggets 126, 76ers 110
PHILADELPHIA — Simmons 6-17 7-10 19, Brewer 7-15 5-6 20, Bolden 1-3 1-2 3, Davis 2-2 0-0 0, Redick 3-8 2-6 10, Highsmith 0-0 0-0 0, Muscala 3-9 1-2 10, Johnson 5-11 5-11, Shamet 2-6 3-8, Korkmaz 2-3 2-7, Milton 0-0 0-0 0. **Totals** 38-91 20 110.

NEW ORLEANS — Craig 6-13 2-2 15, Millsap 1-2 2-4, Jokić 12-22 6-7 32, Barton 6-11 3-16, Harris 1-0 0-0 0, Hemmingway 0-2 0-0 0, Lyles 2-5 0-2 7, Lyle 1-1 0-0 0, Davis 5-7 10 7, Goodwin 1-1 0-0 0, Morris 5-11 0-0 0, Beasley 6-12 0-4 14. **Totals** 48-94 22 126.

NEW ORLEANS — Craig 6-13 2-2 15, Millsap 1-2 2-4, Jokić 12-22 6-7 32, Barton 6-11 3-16, Harris 1-0 0-0 0, Hemmingway 0-2 0-0 0, Lyles 2-5 0-2 7, Lyle 1-1 0-0 0, Davis 5-7 10 7, Goodwin 1-1 0-0 0, Morris 5-11 0-0 0, Beasley 6-12 0-4 14. **Totals** 48-94 22 126.

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AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Djokovic dominates for record 7th title

Nadal overwhelmed when champ plays 'truly perfect match'

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Novak Djokovic was so good, so relentless, so flawless, that Rafael Nadal never stood a chance.

Djokovic reduced one of the greats of the game to merely another outclassed opponent — just a guy, really — and one out of sorts that Nadal even whiffed on one of his famous forehands entirely.

In a breathtakingly mistake-free performance that yielded a remarkably lopsided result, the No. 1-ranked Djokovic overwhelmed Nadal 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 on Sunday night to win a record seventh Australian Open championship and a third consecutive Grand Slam title, raising his count to 15 overall.

"Under the circumstances," Djokovic said, "it was truly a perfect match."

No one who saw it would disagree.

Djokovic's coach, Marian Vajda, said: "I would describe it as dominance."

Nadal's take? "An amazing level of tennis."

"Unbelievable," said Nadal's coach, Carlos Moya. "Novak probably could have won, no matter who the opponent was."

That Djokovic would produce 34 winners and only nine unforced errors was impressive enough. That it came against Nadal — who is ranked No. 2, owns 17 major trophies himself and hadn't dropped a set in the tournament — was hard to comprehend.

Djokovic left Nadal smirking or gritting his teeth or punching his racket strings, unable to compete at all.

Here's how Nadal explained it: To have a chance when Djokovic plays that well, something extra is required. Given that he's coming off a series of injuries, given that he hadn't played since the U.S. Open last September, Nadal couldn't raise his game.

Then again, Nadal conceded, "When the player did almost everything better than you, you can't complain much."

So Djokovic added to previous triumphs in Melbourne in 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016, along with four titles at Wimbledon, three at the U.S. Open and one at the French Open.

He broke his tie with Roger Federer and Roy Emerson for most Australian Open men's titles. He also broke a tie with his idol, Pete Sampras, for third-most Grand Slam trophies: Djokovic now only trails Federer, with 20, and Nadal.

And he is gaining on them.

Then there's this tidbit: Djokovic is the only man in tennis history to have a trio of three-straight-Slam streaks.

So let the talk begin about four majors in a row over two seasons, something Djokovic already managed to do from 2015-16. And, what's more, about a true Grand Slam, winning all four majors in one calendar year, which only has been done by two men, Donald Budge in 1938 and Rod Laver in 1962 and 1969.

"I am aware that making history of the sport that I truly love is something special," the 31-year-old Serb said. "Of course, it motivates me."

He surprised even himself with the way he recovered after problems with his right



MARK SCHIEFFELBUS/AP

Novak Djokovic celebrates after defeating Rafael Nadal in the men's singles final at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Sunday. It was Djokovic's record seventh Australian title and his third straight Grand Slam championship.



KIM CHEUNG/AP

Rafael Nadal reacts after losing a point to Novak Djokovic during the men's singles final at the Australian Open on Sunday.

elbow derailed him.

Djokovic sat out the last half of 2017. He tried to come back at the start of 2018 but

was hampered by the elbow and lost in the fourth round in Melbourne. Soon after, he decided to have surgery.

All that is in the past.

He is again at an elite level. If anything, the gap between him and the rest is growing right now.

A year ago, could he have envisioned being here now?

"Not impossible, but highly unlikely. I don't want to sound arrogant, but I always believe in myself," Djokovic said. "I think that's probably the biggest secret of my success."

Djokovic and Nadal know each other, their styles and their patterns all too well. This was their 53rd meeting — more than any other pair of men in the half-century professional era — and record-equaling 15th at a Grand Slam tournament. It was also their eighth matchup in a major final.

So there should not have been any mysteries out there on Rod Laver Arena's blue court as they began with the temperature, which had topped 105 degrees in recent days, at a manageable 75 and just a hint of wind.

Right from the start, though, this shaped up nothing like their only previous Australian Open title match, back in 2012, which Djokovic won in 5 hours, 53 minutes, the longest Grand Slam final in history.

Evenly matched as they were that night, this time was no contest. None whatsoever. It lasted a tad more than 2 hours.

No ball, no matter how well-struck, was out of Djokovic's reach. He slid and stretched and occasionally even did the splits, contorting his body to get wherever and whenever he needed.

Djokovic grabbed 13 of the first 14 points, including all four that lasted 10 strokes or more. A trend was established.

Of most significance, Nadal was broken the very first time he served Sunday. That gave Djokovic one more break of Nadal than the zero that the Spaniard's five preceding opponents had managed.

Nadal could make no headway on this day. Djokovic won each of the initial 16 points he served and 25 of the first 26.

"One of the most important objectives for the match was to start off well and to bring in the right mindset and intensity," Djokovic said, "and make sure that he also feels my presence."

By the end of the second set, Djokovic had won nearly twice as many points (59-30), made more winners (23-14) and far fewer unforced errors (20-4), while taking 14 of 17 points that lasted at least 10 strokes.

The longest was a 22-shot point, which ended when Nadal netted a backhand to give Djokovic a set point at the end of the first. Djokovic raised his right fist and held it there while staring at his guest box.

He was on the right path. Nadal could do nothing to stop him.

At the moment, no one can.

SPORTS

Sid's games

Crosby nets two goals, three assists en route to All-Star MVP » Page 26



SUPER BOWL



Role player

Rams' RB Gurley doesn't care about Super Bowl touches

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

Todd Gurley is a serious sports fan who loves going to the Super Bowl each winter, attending all of the decadent parties and soaking up the game-day atmosphere.

The Los Angeles Rams' superstar running back will miss out on most of those wild parties this year in Atlanta, but he doesn't mind too much.

"I'm used to going to the Super Bowl, being with my boys, hanging out," Gurley said. "But we actually get a chance to play in it this year, so it's cool, man. It's a great feeling. We're all happy. I'm happy. It's no better feeling than how we're feeling right now."

The Rams (15-3) want Gurley to be more than a spectator against the New England Patriots, and they'll probably need much more from the 2017 Offensive Player of the Year than he was able to

SEE TOUCHES ON PAGE 27

Inside: Patriots' clock control keeping teams off balance, Page 27


Above: Rams running back Todd Gurley celebrates after scoring against the Dallas Cowboys during their divisional round playoff victory in Los Angeles. **Left:** Rams head coach Sean McVay, right, speaks with running back C.J. Anderson during the NFC championship game against the Saints in New Orleans.

Djokovic dominates Nadal in Aussie final » Tennis, Page 31

